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MILITARY'S PEACETIME ROLE (IMPLICATIONS OF THE CIVILIAN
CONSERVATION CORPS EXPERIENCE)

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

GERALD M. BRENNAN, MAJ, USAF
B.A., Michigan State University, 1971

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1986

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19. ABSTRACT

This thesis evaluated the military's role in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), 1933-1942. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of the military's involvement in the CCC on national defense, on the economy and to deduce a net effect on national power. The study looked briefly at other well known peacetime ventures (Lewis and Clark Expedition, Panama Canal Project, air mail service) in which the military has been involved to see if there were comparable effects. An historical research methodology was used. Facts and expert opinion were gleaned from sources and evaluated to discern effects.

The findings of this thesis were that the peacetime military's involvement in nation building and domestic service programs, especially the CCC, had predominantly positive effects on both the economic strength and the military strength of the nation, and that there was an interactive net positive effect on national power.

In view of the positive impacts of the military's involvement in the CCC and other civilian-like pursuits, this study concluded that the military should have an enunciated dual purpose in peacetime: to provide for the common defense and to promote the general welfare. Finally, it was suggested that a "home-for-the-homeless training and public works program" and a "youth program," involving free technical education, para-military training and conservation work might serve the best interests of the nation today as the CCC did in the 1930s.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the view of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

MILITARY'S PEACETIME ROLE (IMPLICATIONS OF THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS EXPERIENCE), 150 pages.

This thesis evaluated the military's role in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), 1933-1942. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of the military's involvement in the CCC on national defense, on the economy and to deduce a net effect on national power. The study looked briefly at other well known peacetime ventures (Lewis and Clark Expedition, Panama Canal Project, air mail service) in which the military has been involved to see if there were comparable effects. An historical research methodology was used. Facts and expert opinion were gleaned from sources and evaluated to discern effects.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

DEVELOPMENT OF THESIS QUESTIONS

Since 1789 the United States' peacetime military has been involved in public works, nation building or domestic service programs.¹ At the same time, the military has been expected to carry out its primary mission, national defense. One might wonder whether the military can effectively serve simultaneously in both roles. Historically, the military has entered every war unprepared. It is conceivable that the military's involvement in duties not related to national defense prevented the military from being ready for war.

However, for a nation to be ready for war requires more than just military preparedness. Among many needs, one vital requirement is a robust economy with a strong production base. Accordingly, it would seem if the peacetime military could help bolster the economy and at the same time prepare for war, then it could significantly enhance national readiness.

An examination of the Army's involvement in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the largest domestic service program the military has ever been involved with,

can be instructive in determining whether the military can effectively serve the economy and national defense at the same time. The CCC was selected as the focus of this study because it was such a large program and of such long duration (1933-1942), and because both the military and the economy were at historic low points when the CCC was established. When the CCC was abolished in 1942, both economic power and military power were approaching historic highs.

Of course the economy was surging and military power was growing because America had entered World War II. But the Army's participation in the CCC also could have helped bring about the improvements in the economy and in defense capability. On the other hand, it is conceivable, if the military had not been involved in the CCC, that the program could have been managed more efficiently and thus resulted in an even stronger economy by 1942. And if the Army had not been diverted by the CCC program from its primary role, it may have been stronger and better prepared for World War II.

Apparently, neither President Franklin D. Roosevelt nor anyone else had given much thought to the Army's role in the CCC in terms of how the Army might affect the economy via its management of the CCC. Neither the President nor anyone outside the War Department considered the effects of

the Army's participation in the CCC on national defense. It is understandable that little consideration would have been given to any indirect effect that the Army might have on the economy via the CCC because it was CCC activity itself, not Army participation, that was envisioned as a pump primer for the economy. It is understandable also that no one outside the War Department would have considered the effect of the CCC program on national defense. After all, the international situation was relatively quiescent, and the overriding emergency in the United States was the economy.

Since the effects of the military's involvement in the CCC on the economy or national defense were not planned, they were merely coincidental.

Considering the negative and positive impacts on national defense and the economy of these coincidental effects gives rise to other questions. Did the coincidental effects have a net positive or negative impact on the economy and national defense? As a consequence of the net effects, was the United States more or less prepared for World War II? If the national command authority had planned effects and managed with the objective of achieving them, would the country have been better prepared for the war? What are the implications today for planning the employment of the peacetime military?

As the defense budget debate ensues today and as the employment of the peacetime military is considered, it

should be helpful to decision-makers to understand the lessons of the military's involvement in the CCC. Knowing those lessons, the national command authority would be better able to decide whether it would be more prudent to employ the military exclusively as a defense force or as both a defense and a domestic service force. Furthermore, if positive and negative coincidental effects of the CCC experience are recognized, decision-makers would be better armed to plan how to most efficiently use the military; that is to say, rather than hope for fortuitous results, they could maximize positive effects and minimize negative effects for both the military and the economy by conscious management to produce desired effects.

Accepting the validity of philosopher George Santayana's assertion that if we do not learn the lessons of history we are condemned to repeat them, this study has as its goal to collate the lessons learned from the CCC experience relative to the economy and national defense (in an interactive sense) and suggest how the nation might benefit if those lessons are applied today. With a better understanding of the CCC experience, the nation might avoid the pain of repeating the negative lessons and profitably repeat the positive lessons learned.

PURPOSE OF THESIS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of the United States armed forces' participation in

the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) on national defense and on the general welfare of the nation.

Two questions focused the research: (1) What did the military do for the CCC and, by extrapolation, for the economy, or the general welfare? (2) What did the CCC experience do for the military and, by extrapolation, for national defense?

An analysis of the evidence bearing on these two questions resulted in a net effect conclusion relative to national power. Finally, the analysis and conclusions reached led to suggestions for a peacetime role for the military today, i.e., whether the armed forces should have an enunciated dual purpose: to provide for the common defense and to promote the general welfare by serving in domestic action or nation building roles; or whether the military should be exclusively a defense force.

METHODOLOGY

To determine the effects of the military's participation in the CCC, an historical research methodology was used. Research focused specifically on opinions and evidence in the literature which pointed to economic and defense effects, negative or positive. The impact on the armed forces and national defense was evaluated by weighing the observations and assessments of key military and political leaders and the interpretations of historians then

and since. Similarly, the impact of the military on the CCC and the economy was documented as political leaders saw it, as the media of that era perceived it, and as historians have since assessed it. The focus of this study was on the period 1933-1942.

DEFINITIONS

This thesis is concerned with the armed forces of the United States, the economy, national defense and national power. These and related terms have shades of meaning peculiar to this study.

- "Armed forces" and "military" are interchangeable terms. They refer to all branches of the uniformed services of the United States: the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Air Force and the Coast Guard. Officers of the Army, Navy and Marines and Warrant Officers of the Coast Guard were involved in the CCC; however, the Army had overall responsibility and was the major participant. These facts led very often in this paper to the use of the terms "Army" and "military" interchangeably. This was the case also because effects on, or caused by, the Army had implications for all armed services then and since.

- "National defense," "readiness," "preparedness" mean essentially the same thing in this study -- the capability of the armed forces of the United States to go quickly to a war footing, properly trained and equipped to fight effectively.

- "Economy" and "general welfare" are used interchangeably. These terms refer to the wealth of the nation as reflected in employment levels, business activity, quality of life, pride, morale and national will of the citizens.

- "National power" is the ability of a nation to achieve its national objectives. Components of national power are military strength, economic strength, population size and relative homogeneity, geography, natural resources, political system and national will.

- "Domestic service," "domestic action programs," "civil works," "nation building" all are essentially the same for the purposes of this study. They refer to non-military activities/pursuits/ventures with which the military is or has been involved.

- "Effects" refers to influences or results, negative or positive. This study did not attempt to measure effects. Instead, it sought to discern effects by evaluating expert opinion. In terms of national defense, experts were assumed to be key military leaders such as the chiefs of staff, other senior officers, the secretaries of war and the President. The men in those different leadership positions during the era of the CCC did not always agree about the effect of the CCC experience on national defense. And each leader changed his mind from

time to time. Still, an overall consensus about effects was discernible and is reported here.

Concerning the economy, the effects were determined on the basis of changes in economic activity and the wealth of the nation generated by the CCC program as reported by the media of the era and by historians since. Again, the economic effects were not measurable, but a consensus of opinion about the effects was discernible and is documented.

The interactive effects of the Army and the CCC interrelationship and the implications those effects had for national power then and now, and for employment of the military today, are estimated and analyzed by this author.

ASSUMPTIONS

This thesis focuses on economic strength and military strength, assuming they are key elements of national power, and that the stronger each of these elements, the more powerful the nation.

- It is assumed that military power is increased by: larger budgets; larger manpower authorizations; larger, well trained reserves; a more skilled population base (one with a great diversity of skills, including basic military skills); greater productive capacity; greater readiness and ability to mobilize; a better public image of the armed forces and greater public support.

- It is assumed that economic power is increased by: higher levels of employment; higher levels of business activity and public consumption of goods and services; more natural resources, improved and conserved to sustain a strong economy; higher hope, morale and a sense of well-being among the populace.

LIMITATIONS

This study makes leaps in history to relate effects of the CCC experience to national defense and the economy to effects of other domestic service and nation building roles in which the military has been involved. Similarities of effects perceived are by necessity estimates.

The validity of conclusions reached in this thesis are limited by reliance on circumstantial evidence and opinion and by the writer's analysis and judgment about evidence and opinion. A more empirically based study which might establish cause-and-effect relationships, perhaps one with a statistical orientation, could be a useful follow-on study.

BACKGROUND

American military history is certainly a history of warfare. The nation was born in revolutionary warfare and has fought through seven major wars and many lesser conflicts. Raymond G. O'Connor in his book, American Defense Policy in Perspective, lists 106 wars which

Americans fought between 1775 and 1919. One could conclude that the military had little time for anything but to fight wars.²

However, American military history is also a peacetime history. The majority of the armed forces most of the time have not been engaged in conflict. Rather, in the long periods between wars, they have been involved in nation building and other peacetime pursuits.

It is not clear whether the involvement of the peacetime military in nonmilitary pursuits has benefited the economy and national defense. It may be because of the uncertainty about the effects on the economy and national defense that there is no agreement as to whether the peacetime military should be involved at all in domestic service, civil works and nation building programs. The issue has been debated since colonial times. It is still argued today.

It is not merely an issue that has the military on one side and civilians on the other. It is more complex. Military professionals have never agreed among themselves on the issue, and they do not today. Neither has there been unanimity among political leaders, the national command authority nor the general population.

"There is a long standing and deeply rooted Anglo-American prejudice against standing armies."³ The

American public has always considered "...that a professional army was dangerous to civil liberty."⁴ Americans have felt that the professional military was of some value in war, but only "a necessary evil in time of peace."⁵ Because of these feelings, Americans have always favored just a skeleton professional army, a minimal standing force, which can be quickly fleshed out in a time of crisis by the call-up of the citizen-soldier (i.e., the reserves) and conscripts. Between wars, the idea was that the military was but a standby defense force.⁶

In spite of this attitude, Americans have never looked with more favor on their armed forces than when they have been involved in peacetime pursuits that have contributed to the general welfare of the nation. Examples of the most well-known and popular activities include the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806); the Panama Canal Project (1903-1914); the air mail service (1918 and 1934); the Civilian Conservation Corps (1933-1942). Each of these ventures was nonmilitary but involved military men, and each activity had far-reaching effects on the general welfare (i.e., the economy) of the nation and effects as well as on the military (i.e., the defense capability) of the nation. A perusal of the literature concerned with these ventures will find only minor criticism -- but extravagant praise -- for the military role.

Even so, did the effects indicate that a secondary role for the peacetime military is really in the best interests of national defense and the economy--national power? This issue has been an emotional one throughout American history. It was in the CCC era and it remains so today.

Many peace groups and individual citizens think that a peacetime military is an economic and political burden. Even in those ventures where the military has been lauded for efficiency and effectiveness, these citizens would argue that the project (whatever it was) could have been done even better by civilians. Citizens of this persuasion would abolish the military altogether. This attitude was especially prevalent during the 1930s.⁷ On the other hand, most citizens then and now recognize that a peacetime military must be maintained. And they would argue that this standby manpower pool should be put to some good use to benefit the economy or the general welfare.⁸

But many military men feel that the military has only one reason for being--to defend the nation--and that the military should not be diverted from its primary duty. General Douglas MacArthur, the Chief of Staff, expressed that sentiment in 1932.⁹ Some military leaders today seem to say the same thing in that they argue for appropriations only in terms of a "threat" to national

security.¹⁰ Even Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger has indicated recently that the military has only one role.¹¹

But some professional soldiers recognize that in peacetime they need to serve the country in various capacities. In addition to training to "stand by" to defend freedom, they see that the public and the military would enjoy mutual benefits if soldiers were involved in society.¹² Many professional soldiers have a keen social conscience and maintain that domestic service responsibility "has always been a factor in good soldiering."¹³ It seems that the professional military man has always been troubled about his peacetime role. One senior officer, a student at the Army War College in 1967, showed his concern in the very title of his student thesis: "The Worried Warriors--The Dilemma of the Military Professionals."¹⁴ Aware that the public does not often perceive that he is rendering a worthwhile service in peacetime, that War College student wanted "to create in the public eye a correct view of the military professional in his role so that traditional prejudices can be dissipated..."¹⁵ Finally, the Department of the Army has shown official concern for its peacetime role as it asked the War College in October, 1972, to address the question: "Why an Army?"¹⁶

Although there is no agreement in either the military or among the populace about an appropriate role for the peacetime armed forces, there is widespread and general concurrence that economic strength and military strength are interdependent and that together they enhance national power. They are key elements among the several components of national power.¹⁷

It is interesting to note that the framers of the United States Constitution coupled the concepts of "defense" and "welfare" in the same line of the preamble as they listed the reasons for establishing the Constitution, among them, "to...provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare,..." They seemed to imply that the defense system and the economic system were interdependent. The first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, clearly said that they were "inextricably woven." Other leaders of the new Republic, namely George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, also believed in this interdependence. In various ways, they said that military power is built upon economic foundations, and that a strong economy requires a strong military to ensure its viability. The great economist Adam Smith certainly recognized the military-economic relationship. He "believed that the ability of a

nation to wage war is best measured in terms of its productive capacity."¹⁸ The modern day Joint Chiefs of Staff also affirm this relationship, saying: "The military potential of nations can be measured, in part, by peacetime production bases..."¹⁹

A brief summary of the two discussions above will help with the transition into the heart of this study: (1) There is no agreement about how the peacetime military should be employed. (2) There is agreement that military strength and economic strength are interdependent and that national power is determined in large part by the strength of the economy and of the armed forces. Recognizing the uncertainty about effects on national defense and the economy of using the military in domestic service roles, it would seem that it might be important to examine the lessons of history. Lessons learned from past experience may indicate whether it is more prudent to use the military exclusively as a defense force or in a dual role: as a defense and domestic service force. On the other hand, it is conceivable that maximum military strength could be obtained in peacetime by allowing the military to give all its attention to matters of defense. It is equally conceivable that the economy could reach maximum strength by allowing the free marketplace to work without interference

from the military. Public works and domestic service projects might be done more efficiently by private enterprise, since potential profits should motivate industry to excellent performance at the least cost.

On the other hand, if the economy and national defense were considered together and caused to play together in a complementary way, it is conceivable that both would benefit significantly and that national power might be maximized.

The literature on the CCC experience provided ample evidence of how the economy and the military coincidentally played together, whether they in fact did or did not promote each other and collectively increase or decrease national power. An evaluation of the evidence collected in this study led to conclusions relative to the central questions of this thesis and to suggestions for employment of the peacetime military today in order to maximize national power.

Although this thesis did not answer every question it posed, nor even definitively answer the central questions, it did conclude that the evidence suggested, at least, that the military's involvement in one peacetime venture, the CCC, had positive effects on both national defense and the economy and thus on national power. Before getting to the central questions of this thesis the research

focused on the reasons for the creation of the CCC and the immediate involvement of the military.

GENESIS OF THE CCC

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt assumed office in March, 1933 the country was in the throes of the Great Depression. In addition to human privation, unemployment and all the other problems attendant with economic depression, at the same time America's natural resources had been devastated by three centuries of waste and ill use. The condition of the forests, waters and farm lands were at a low point and boded ill for the long term wealth of the United States. President Roosevelt attacked both the problem of unemployment, which was especially severe among young men, and the crisis in conservation by establishing the Civilian Conservation Corps.²⁰

The President was convinced that the CCC could save the land by reforestation. He also believed that the conservation program, by providing employment in a healthful, rural environment would benefit thousands of poor, dispirited, aimless boys "soul, mind, and body..."²¹ Roosevelt predicted that not only would his land policy save the youth and the nation's natural resources, but also would create jobs for a million men. Conceivably, the CCC could help significantly to lead the country out of the depression.

In January, 1933, Senator James Couzens introduced a bill in the Senate that presaged involvement of the armed forces in the CCC program. The bill would have required "the Army to house, feed, and clothe unemployed young men from the ages of seventeen to twenty-four at military posts."²² Military authorities opposed the bill and it was never passed. However, the germ of an idea was planted and it probably generated the thinking that would require direct military participation in later relief programs, but most particularly in the CCC.²³

Only five days after his inaugural, on March 4, 1933, President Roosevelt outlined his conservation and work relief plans. In conference with the secretaries of agriculture, the interior, labor, war, the director of the budget, the Army judge advocate-general and the solicitor of the Department of the Interior, Roosevelt told them he wanted them to develop "a plan to put 500,000 men to work on a variety of conservation tasks."²⁴ After he reviewed the draft proposal from the first conference, the President tasked the secretaries of war, interior, agriculture, and labor "...to constitute yourselves an informal committee of the Cabinet to coordinate the plans for the proposed Civilian Conservation Corps."²⁵ Their resulting memorandum became essentially the President's proposal on the CCC in his message to Congress on relief.

On March 21, 1933, the President outlined his proposal on the relief of unemployment to the Congress. He wanted quick action on his first measure, the creation of a

civilian conservation corps to be used in simple work, primarily confining itself to forestry, erosion, flood control, and related projects. Such works would be controlled by the existing machinery of the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, War, and the Interior...²⁶

The President told Congress that if they made his CCC proposal law within two weeks he could have 250,000 men employed by early summer. Roosevelt said, "It is not a panacea for the unemployment, but it is an essential step in this emergency."²⁷

The Congress did act speedily. Identical bills were put together in both the Senate and the House. Debate ensued; however, only two measures in the bill stirred significant controversy; Army involvement and the dollar-a-day wage scale. Organized labor and socialist groups complained that the very idea of a military role in the CCC camps smacked of fascism. They feared militarism of the youth. And labor was particularly critical of the low wage scale, saying that the government would be endorsing poverty at a bare subsistence level. Labor feared that the general wage scale might be affected, that the government's "dollar-a-day" might become the standard throughout the country.²⁸

Members of both House and Senate committees were concerned with labor's criticism, and they conducted appropriate hearings to resolve those concerns. Effective testimony from the secretary of labor and the secretary of war allayed fears. Miss Francis Perkins, secretary of labor, pointed out that most of the enrollees would not be men from the regular work force. Instead, they would be young, unmarried men for the most part, and regular work scales would not apply. Furthermore, they would be provided with much more than a wage -- namely, food, clothing, and housing. She pointed out, too, that enrollment would be voluntary and that "nothing in the bill suggested that labor would be regimented in any way."²⁹

Secretary of War George Dern emphasized the limited role of the Army, reassuring labor leaders that "militarization of labor" was a fear unfounded.³⁰

Nevertheless, labor remained strongly enough opposed to the bill in its original form that the House and Senate committees rewrote it. In the new bill, they left out references to enrollment and discharges and to the \$30 monthly wage rate. In summary, the wording in the revised bill was general, vague, and gave the President authority "to run the CCC relatively unhampered by statutory fetters."³¹

On March 31, 1933, Congress passed the new bill and the President signed it. He had his Civilian Conservation Corps. The legislation actually gave Roosevelt broader powers than he had asked for. He speedily set about using them to put the CCC into operation. On April 5, 1933, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 6101 to establish the CCC's skeletal organization, and got the program underway.³²

Speed was important if the President's goal of employing 250,000 young men by early summer was to be realized. Fortunately, because the Army had been alerted by the Couzens' Bill and had assumed Army participation inevitable in relief efforts sooner or later, the General Staff had a plan very nearly ready for implementation by the time the final CCC bill was signed on April 5, 1933.³³

The Army was no means the only agency involved with getting the ball rolling. The organization, direction and management of the CCC was accomplished by an amalgamation of agencies. At the federal level, agencies involved were the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Interior, and War. At the state level, the various departments of forests, parks and welfare participated.³⁴

ORGANIZATION OF THE CCC

The President appointed Robert Fechner, head of the Machinists Union, national director of the CCC. This

appointment of a labor leader helped reduce fears of organized labor about the militarization of the CCC. Roosevelt directed the secretaries of labor, war, interior and agriculture to designate a representative to serve on an advisory council to the national director.³⁵

The Department of Labor was responsible for the enrollment of youths. At the lowest levels, however, it was the various states' relief and welfare organizations and state veterans organizations which selected enrollees. To be selected a young man had to be between 18 and 25 years old (later 17-28), in good health and on public relief or from a family that was on relief. A quota of 30,000 World War I veterans was allowed to enroll. An exception to the age limit was made for them because of their wartime service. Eligible youth were recruited from all over the country, but state relief agencies found the majority of them in urban areas. Many of them were illiterate or nearly so. The initial enrollment period for all eligible was six months; however, a generous reenrollment policy allowed the men to stay on for up to two years.³⁶

The War Department's extensive responsibilities were carried out by the Army. The Army processed enrollees at induction centers around the country, maintained their personnel records, managed all administrative matters, paid them and performed medical evaluations. The Army organized

enrollees into 200-man companies and clothed, equipped, and conditioned the men for work in the field, then made the logistical arrangements to transport them to the camps and get them housed. Initially, it was also the Army's responsibility to construct the camps³⁷ and

Army officers assumed the leadership of the CCC companies, the Army's Chief of Finance became the CCC's fiscal officer, the Quartermaster General became the purchasing agent, the Adjutant General's office compiled the Corps' records, and the Assistant Chiefs of Staff, G-1, G-3, and G-4 developed plans for day-to-day operation of the Corps.³⁸

Although the military's role was intended to be minimal and temporary, it was apparent to the President that the Army was the only federal agency capable of handling such a huge undertaking. Thus, the Army's role was expanded in the first weeks of the CCC project. Essentially, the Army had to assume full responsibility for the management and operation of the CCC.³⁹

The Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, called the technical services, were to use their various bureaus to select work projects, supervise the work, and administer the camps. Interior was more specifically responsible for work projects in the national parks; the Agricultural Department was in charge of the U.S. Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service projects. Interior and Agriculture also coordinated all work on state

and private lands. These projects were to accomplish not only conservation goals but also to provide opportunities for enrollees to learn various job skills.⁴⁰

Work projects were grouped into ten general classifications: (1) structural improvement; (2) transportation; (3) erosion control; (4) flood control; (5) forest culture; (6) forest protection; (7) landscape and recreation; (8) range (grazing land) control; (9) wildlife management; (10) miscellaneous (emergency work, surveys, mosquito control).⁴¹

With the CCC's organizational framework established, its charter set and work projects outlined and approved, momentum quickly built which facilitated the accomplishment of the President's initial goal: getting 250,000 men employed by early summer. One would instinctively think that an administrative nightmare might develop, considering the nature of government bureaucracies -- and in the case of the CCC, several were involved. However, the CCC in fact functioned smoothly and became one of the nation's most results-oriented projects ever conceived. Its effectiveness was due to the conscientious work of all involved and to the expertise that the various agencies brought to the project. Thousands of administrators, leaders and executives deserve credit for this, the most popular and successful of President Roosevelt's New Deal programs. However, three men

at the helm especially were vital to the initial success of the CCC and its continuing achievements.⁴² Robert Fechner, national director, stands out as the right kind of leader at the right time. He was a tireless worker and had the good judgment to authorize a decentralized management system. The several agencies were able to carry out their various responsibilities unfettered by strict rules from the national director's office.⁴³

The second individual of great importance to the CCC was W. Frank Persons, who was appointed by the secretary of labor to head the United States Employment Service. In that capacity, Mr. Persons was responsible for the selection of CCC enrollees. Because of his astute plan to use the states' existing local relief agencies to select enrollees, he had the selection process in operation within three days of being told to start. "Selection was to be made on a state quota basis in proportion to population."⁴⁴ Those selected were those most in need. Obviously, state relief agencies knew those "most in need" and thus were able to quickly recruit enrollees.

The third individual of note was Colonel Duncan K. Major, Jr., the G-3 General Staff Officer who wrote the plan for the Army's involvement with the CCC. Col. Major was chosen by General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, to be the War Department representative on the national director's

advisory council. Major's enlightened guidance to and effective coordination of CCC matters with all agencies involved facilitated the accomplishment of the vast CCC mobilization task.⁴⁵ The historian John Salmond said emphatically that "Colonel Major more than anyone else deserves praise for the CCC's successful mobilization."⁴⁶

Certainly, it was due in great measure to the above three individuals that the CCC became a viable organization so quickly. With their efforts and the hard work of thousands of other men and women, 270,000 men were enrolled in the CCC and were in place in 1,315 camps by July 1, 1933, only 87 days after the Executive Order was signed authorizing the CCC. The Army had processed more men -- peaking at 13,843 per day by June 1, 1933 -- in that 87-day period than it had during the Spanish-American War, even more than it had processed during the first three months of World War I.⁴⁷

The CCC program had immediate economic and social impact. National markets were required to produce tools and equipment and services for the camps and to enable CCC work projects to proceed. The enrollees sent \$25 of their \$30 monthly wage home to their families which helped feed and clothe them and generate more economic activity. Men

learned to work and live together in the camps. More than 48,000 illiterate youth were educated in rudimentary reading and writing skills. By the time the program ended in 1942, nearly three million men had participated.⁴⁸

SUMMARY

From the earliest days of the Republic, the military has been involved in public works, domestic service or nation building roles, which has had effects on both the economy and national defense. There has never been agreement as to whether the military should have any mission except its primary one--defense. However, there is and has always been general agreement that military strength and economic strength seem to be interdependent and that together they significantly define national power. A study of the military's involvement in the CCC offers an opportunity to see how the economy and the armed forces interacted in one case to affect defense capability, the economy and national power.

The CCC was conceived by President Roosevelt during the darkest days of the Great Depression to relieve unemployment and to save the nation's natural resources. Responsibility for this New Deal program was assigned to a national director and the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Interior and War. The Army carried out the War Department's responsibilities. Although the President had intended that

the military's role would be minimal and temporary. It became immediately apparent that no other federal agency was capable of administering this vast program. Thus, the Army assumed the major burden, mobilizing and organizing the CCC in 1933 and managing it until its demise in 1942.

Specific military contributions to the CCC and via the CCC to the economy will be examined in chapter III, after a review of the relevant literature in chapter II.

CHAPTER 1 ENDNOTES

- 1 The Department of the Army Manual (1982): pp. 5-3-5-6, 5-8.
- 2 Raymond G. O'Connor, ed., American Defense Policy in Perspective (1965): pp. 5-6.
- 3 Edward Mead Earle, ed., Makers of Modern Strategy (1948): p. 125.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 O'Connor, p. v.
- 6 Mark S. Watson, Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations (1950): p. 35.
- 7 William Manchester, The Glory and the Dream, (1973): p. 126.
- 8 Paul A. Weinstein, "Occupational Convergence and the Role of the Military in Economic Development," Explorations in Economic Development, 7 (March 1970): p. 346.
- 9 Annual Report of the Secretary of War (1933): pp. 8-9. (Hereafter cited as ARSW).
- 10 See Major General Robert A. Rosenberg, "Guns and Butter", a paper/speech for Air Force Studies and Analysis, Headquarters, Air Force Assistant Chief of Staff, April 1983.
- 11 Department of Defense's Annual Report to the Congress Fiscal Year 1986 (1985): p. 25.
- 12 Phillip J. Katauskos, "Last Muster for the Citizen's Army?" U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 98 (February 1972): p. 66.
- 13 Carl M. Putnam, "The CCC Experience," Military Review 53 (September 1973): p. 50.
- 14 Wolfred K. White, "The Worried Warriors -- The Dilemma of the Military Professionals," Student Essay, U.S. Army War College, 1967.
- 15 Ibid, pp. 23-24.

- 16 Putnam, p. 49.
- 17 John Spanier, Games Nations Play (1984): p. 124.
- 18 Earle, p. 121.
- 19 United States Military Posture FY 1986 (undated), p. 14.
- 20 John A. Salmond, The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study (1967): pp. 2-4.
- 21 Ibid., p. 6.
- 22 Ibid., p. 9.
- 23 Charles William Johnson, "The Civilian Conservation Corps: The Role of the Army" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1968): pp. 4-5.
- 24 Salmond, p. 10.
- 25 Ibid., p. 11.
- 26 Ibid., p. 12.
- 27 Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (1938): Vol. 2, p. 81.
- 28 Salmond, pp. 14-16.
- 29 Ibid., p. 16.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid., p. 19.
- 32 Rosenman, Vol 2, pp. 107-108.
- 33 John W. Killigrew, "The Impact Of The Great Depression on the Army, 1929-1936" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Indiana, 1960): pp. XII-12-13.
- 34 Perry H. Merrill, Roosevelt's Forest Army (1981): p. vii.

- 35 Putnam, p. 53.
- 36 Merrill, pp. 11-14, 199.
- 37 Merrill, p. 8.
- 38 Johnson, pp. 1-11.
- 39 Ibid., pp. 8-9, 14.
- 40 Merrill, pp. 7-8.
- 41 Ibid., p. 9.
- 42 Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr., "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Pennsylvania: A Case Study of a New Deal Relief Agency in Operation," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 100 (January, 1976): p. 66.
- 43 Johnson, p. 1.
- 44 Salmond, p. 27.
- 45 Johnson, pp. 5, 10-12.
- 46 Salmond, p. 45.
- 47 Gordon R. Young, ed., The Army Almanac (1959): p. 744 and Merrill, p. 14.
- 48 See report of National Director James J. McEntee in Merrill, p. 196.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a plethora of works which deal with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Nearly every American history book which addresses the New Deal era at least cursorily mentions the CCC; most as a minimum describe the purpose of the CCC. However, neither primary nor secondary sources were discovered which focus directly on the questions which oriented this research, i.e., What did the military do for the CCC and, by extrapolation, for the economy? and What did the CCC do for the military and, by extrapolation, for national defense?

In getting at the central questions, several ancillary questions had to be researched. A perusal of appropriate literature was done to determine the historical relationship between the military and the economy, to discover the results of the military's involvement in other domestic service or nation building activities, to ascertain military and civilian feelings about the military's participation in civilian-like duties and, finally, to understand the condition of the military and the economy in 1933 when the military became involved in the CCC and the condition of the military and the economy in 1942 when the CCC ceased to exist.

Secondary works were of central importance to this thesis because of their retrospective analyses. In the sense that periodicals and newspapers are primary sources, they were invaluable in gaining an appreciation of contemporary perceptions. The Congressional Record was not used because the results of debates about establishing the CCC and using the Army to manage it were summarized in numerous secondary sources. However, the Congressional Record of April 20, 1971, was useful in revealing hindsight attitudes of the American people, as reflected by the Congress, toward the CCC and military participation.

Several periodicals and newspapers were of great value in determining the Army's effect on the CCC and the economy. Numerous articles in Nation, News-Week At Home, Business Week, The New Republic, the New York Times, and the Army and Navy Journal reported on business activity generated by the CCC. The Army and Navy Journal more specifically related CCC fiscal matters as managed by the Army finance officer and quartermaster. The majority of reports about the CCC were written in the period 1933-1936. For example, the New York Times printed hundreds of articles on the CCC from March-December, 1933. Then, for the entire year of 1936, only half as many CCC articles were published. By 1938, the number was cut by half again. Likewise, articles on the CCC

in other newspapers and magazines diminished. A sampling of articles from the above sources which were relevant to this study are listed in the attached bibliography.

Reports of the CCC's national directors, Robert Fechner and James McEntee, as printed in the Army and Navy Journal and in Perry H. Merrill, Roosevelt's Forest Army (1981) provided the best summaries of what the CCC camps spent and the results of that spending on local economies and on national employment. The New York Times also related CCC spending and business activity and regularly reported President Roosevelt's assessment of the economic effects of CCC work and expenditures.

Two Ph.D. dissertations were of particular value to this study. Charles William Johnson in "The Civilian Conservation Corps: The Role of the Army" (University of Michigan, 1968), describes how the Army got involved in the CCC as well as political and personal relationships between the Army and War Department leaders and the national director and figures in the other agencies, including the Executive Office, who were involved in the CCC. Johnson also relates the Army role in CCC camp management and gives an excellent summary of conservation work done by CCC enrollees on military installations. Johnson also provides a keen analysis of the Army's reluctance to participate in the CCC.

John W. Killigrew in "The Impact of the Great Depression on the Army, 1929-1936" (Indiana University, 1960), has an excellent chapter on the role of the Army in the mobilization of the CCC. Killigrew is the best single source concerning the budget for military activities during the depression era, and he provides an insightful analysis of the status of the Army as affected by appropriations.

One M.A. thesis was useful. Michael T. Chase, "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Missouri: An Experiment in Civil-Military Cooperation" (University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1977), gives an overview of Army involvement in the CCC. Chase's work is most important for its description of the Army's role in achievements in the camps in Missouri. For specific activities and accomplishments and problems in another state, Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr., "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Pennsylvania: A Case Study of a New Deal Relief Agency in Operation," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography (January, 1976) provides an excellent report, though it appears to have an anti-Army bias.

The best categorical summary of the Army's role in the CCC from mobilization to camp management, education and training and militarism is found in Carl M. Putnam, "The CCC Experience," Military Review (September, 1973). Putnam also provides commentary on the attitude of the military

toward involvement in domestic service activities. Putnam addresses the impact of the CCC experience on national defense but does not provide a net effect conclusion.

The most comprehensive history of the CCC is John A. Salmond, The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study (1967). Salmond focuses on Washington, D.C. and the central administration of the CCC, but he does not neglect any aspect of the CCC organization or operation. His work is of great value in understanding the genesis of the CCC and what President Roosevelt expected the project to do for the country. Salmond provides a balanced report of CCC failings and accomplishments and a fair treatment of the Army's good and bad deeds in managing the project. Salmond's report on the CCC's weakening and the reason for its final demise is the best coverage of that subject. The vast conservation achievements of the CCC are well documented by Salmond.

Perry H. Merrill in Roosevelt's Forest Army also reports comprehensively on the CCC's conservation work. Merrill gives a state-by-state account of projects completed and of their value to the states.

Publications which best show how the CCC affected national defense were the Annual Report of the Secretary of War (1933 through 1938), and Larry I. Bland and Sharon Ritenour, Eds., The Papers of George Catlett

Marshall (1981). In Bland and Ritenour, General Marshall's personal observations as a commander over 35 CCC camps and later as the Chief of Staff tell from the perspective of a military expert what the CCC meant to the Army and to national defense.

The letters from the CCC enrollees collected in Alfred C. Oliver, Jr., and Harold M. Dudley, The New America: The Spirit of the Civilian Conservation Corps (1937), and in Merrill, Roosevelt's Forest Army, are excellent sources from which to gain an appreciation of what the CCC meant to enrollees personally. In their letters, the enrollees described the CCC experience in terms of its financial benefit to them and in terms of the influence it had on them later as members of the armed forces in World War II.

William E. Leuchtenburg in Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (1963), gives a graphic description of economic conditions in America and of the state of deterioration of natural resources when the CCC was established in 1933. William Manchester, The Glory and the Dream (1973), gives a poignant account of the despair of the people and unimaginable suffering in the United States. Manchester also shows how the economy affected the military's condition, and he succinctly describes the poor military status brought on by the

depression. Very important to this study was Manchester's account of how the American people felt about the military in that day.

In Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., The Public Papers And Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (13 vols., 1938-1950). Roosevelt describes how he directed the establishment of the CCC and reports his perceptions of CCC achievements, focusing especially on spirit, pride and morale of the enrollees. Franklin D. Roosevelt, On Our Way (1934), is an excellent account in the first person of the President's purpose in organizing the CCC.

Articles in the Infantry Journal (1933-1934 issues), were useful in determining what the CCC experience meant to the regular Army officers who commanded the camps. Also Curtis E. LeMay and MacKinley Kantor, Mission With LeMay (1965) tells the significance of LeMay's CCC experience when he was assistant camp commander. General LeMay relates positive and negative experiences at the time and evaluates them in retrospect.

Several works provided excellent summaries of the evolution of American defense policy and discussed military preparedness and the public's feeling about the military and preparedness. Raymond G. O'Connor, ed., American Defense Policy in Perspective (1965), tells not only why and how defense policy evolved as it did, but also explains

why and how Americans feel as they do about defense policy and the peacetime military. T. Harry Williams, America's at War (1960) tells about American's resistance to preparations for war, and as a consequence how the nation blunders into conflicts. Mark S. Watson in The Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations (1950) also treats this subject. And Russell F. Weigley in both History of the United States Army (1967), and The American Way of War (1973), addresses defense policy and peacetime unpreparedness. Watson and Weigley in these three works provide explanations also of why the American public is suspicious of the peacetime military and why the people prefer to maintain only a skeleton standing Army.

Watson's "The Deterioration of the Army Between The Wars" in Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations and Killigrew's, "The Impact of the Great Depression on the Army, 1929-1936," are of greatest value in gaining an understanding of the condition of the Army in the 1930s.

The best summary of the evolution of the professional Army is in The Department of the Army Manual (1964). In addition, the Manual provides a very good brief overview of the Army in civilian programs from 1789 to 1982. Gordon R. Young, ed., The Army Almanac (1964) also has a good section on the Army in civil works projects.

Richard B. Crossland in Twice the Citizen (1984) presents the best analysis of what the CCC meant to the Army reserve officers. Likewise, Robert L. Gushwa, The Best and Worst of Times (1977), describes the impact of the CCC on the Army chaplaincy. One can extrapolate from both works effects on national defense.

Chapter 6 in Edward Mead Earle, ed., Makers of Modern Strategy (1943), discusses the economic foundations of military power as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, among others, thought on the subject. That discussion was important to this study for its historical tracing of the interdependence of economic and military power. Also, Adam Yarmolinsky, The Military Establishment (1971), further defines the economic and military relationship in modern times. Two economic-sociological studies, Albert Szymanski, "Military Spending and Economic Stagnation," American Journal of Sociology (July, 1973), and Paul A. Weinstein, "Occupational Convergence and the Role of the Military in Economic Development," Explorations in Economic Development (March, 1970), are further illuminating in that they demonstrate the interrelationship of the economy and the military via the use of a social science methodology. Then, United States Military Posture for

FY 86 brings the economic and military relationship up to date.

Major General Robert A. Rosenberg, "Guns and Butter" (1983), indicates the singlemindedness of military leaders in justifying the defense budget. Casper W. Weinberger in Department of Defense's Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1986 (1985), also shows the current lack of emphasis on domestic service or nation building roles of the military in requesting defense appropriations. Rather, in both of these sources the "threat" argument is almost the exclusive theme.

Various sources were consulted to assess the results of the military's participation in domestic service and nation building roles other than the CCC. Forrest R. Blackburn, "The Army in Western Exploration," Military Review (September, 1971), provides a good summary of what the explorations of Lewis and Clark, Zebulon Pike, and John C. Fremont meant to the wealth of the nation. Bob Considine, The Panama Canal (1951), relates the importance of that Army-engineered project to the economic and military strength of America. Floyd J. Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble: The United States Army and the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906," (M. M. A. S. Thesis, 1980), reports on an Army rescue operation which aided the recovery

of a devastated city and resulted in high praise for the military. Page Shanburger, Tracks Across the Sky (1964), documents the Army's initiation of air mail service in America and how it resulted in benefits to the economy and national defense capability. Also, John F. Shiner, Foulois and the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1931-1935 (1963), describes the Army air mail service experience in 1934 and the resulting favorable public image and the ultimate effects it would have on the Army Air Corps' performance in World War II.

Carlisle R. Petty, "An Investment in American Youth" (Student Thesis, Army War College, 1970), and Wolfred K. White, "The Worried Warriors--The Dilemma of the Military Professionals" (Student Essay, Army War College, 1967), address the military professional's concern about his public image and his attitude toward public service. Finally, Phillip J. Katauskas, "Last Muster for the Citizen's Army," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (February, 1972), takes a position on the importance of civilian-military interaction. Katauskas, a professional military man, feels that such interaction should have positive effects for national defense and the general welfare. John Alden, "National Service," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (July, 1969) also considers that

the nation's interests would be best served if everyone were involved in national service. His article is about a balance of responsibility between civil and military service. Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State (1957) points out that those nations which fail to develop a balanced pattern of civil military relations waste resources and run great risks to their security.

There were no gaps in the literature relative to the central questions of this thesis, nor to the ancillary questions. The military's role in the CCC was well documented and the CCC's importance to the general welfare of the nation in the 1930s was reported in detail. However, in none of the literature are effects on national defense definitively reported. Neither is there anywhere an attempt made to show how the Army's management of the CCC affected the economy. Accordingly, this thesis sought to compile such effects, deduce a net effect for both the economy and national defense, and attempted to analyze the significance of the net effects in the era of the Great Depression and up to the beginning of World War II. Lastly, a goal of this study was to glean from the literature lessons that might have application today in the employment of the peacetime military.

Only those sources of most relevance to this thesis are discussed above. Many other works were consulted in the

generation and development of ideas of concern in this study. They are cited in the attached bibliography.

CONCLUSION

There is a wealth of material on the CCC containing data and opinion pertinent to various study orientations. Throughout the literature there are numerous but scattered references to the impact of the CCC on defense capability and the economy. Previous studies have not collected and analyzed the facts and opinion and drawn net effect conclusions in the way that this thesis did.

CHAPTER 3

THE ARMY'S EFFECTS ON THE CCC AND THE ECONOMY

CONDITIONS IN AMERICA, 1933

To understand how the Army helped the CCC and the nation, it should be useful to know what conditions were in the country at that time. Certainly conditions were miserable. The 1930's was the era of the Great Depression, and America had touched bottom. There was a depression of the economy; there was a depression of national spirit; there was a depression of natural resources. The absolute low point of that tragic decade was the winter of 1932-33.

By that time America's wealth of natural resources had been squandered. Of over 800,000,000 acres of forests which had once covered the land only about 100,000,000 acres remained. Without the protection of the trees, flooding and soil erosion could not be checked. The effects worsened every year, and by 1934 over 300,000,000 acres of topsoil (one-sixth of the continent) was gone.¹

The nation's economy was in as bad condition as its natural resources. Industrial production was off by more than 50 percent compared to the 1929 rate. Steel plants were operating at only 12 percent of capacity, and there was almost no sign of a turn for the better. Industrial construction from 1929 to 1932 had slumped from \$949 million to \$74 million. The unemployed numbered over 13 million,

and many lived under the most primitive conditions. Families lived in tents, in caves or under bridges. Some had makeshift shelters of cardboard, junked cars and rusty barrels. People were without adequate food or clothing, and children were barefoot in the winter. Hungry men fought over garbage set outside restaurants and they searched the city dumps for half-rotted vegetables.²

Americans were in the depths of despair in the winter of 1932-33. Joblessness and hunger touched all social classes. Unemployment had reached its highpoint; 15 million people were out of work--over one-third of the total work force. About 54 percent of the youth between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four who were in the labor market were unemployed or underemployed. About 250,000 youth were on the road, wandering aimlessly, a youth corps of hoboes. Their plight was pathetic.³ From temporary shelter to soup kitchen and along the nation's highways and railroads and back to the temporary shelters, Nation magazine had one journalist following and reporting the sad saga of this "Starvation Army" in the spring of 1933.⁴

Thirty-eight states had closed their banks by March, 1933, and the other ten states operated their banks on a restricted basis. Many stock market and commodity exchanges had closed, the Chicago Board of Trade for the first time since 1848. One Chicagoan wrote, "...the city seemed to

have died."⁵ The people were dispirited. Truly, hope seemed to have died. However, one human passion was alive -- fear.

The new President took the oath of office on March 4, 1933, and set out immediately to dispel that fear and to restore hope. In his inaugural address, Roosevelt told Americans "that the only things we have to fear is fear itself -- nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror..."⁶

If the President's intent was to uplift the people with inspirational words, his purpose was to build hope, spirit and confidence with action. His famous "First One Hundred Days" was a time of most decisive action. He vowed to wage war against the economic emergency. And of the dozens of programs he initiated to fight that war, the CCC was one of the boldest. Since the CCC project was an aggressive action in a "war", it was certainly appropriate that a war-fighting body -- the Army -- should be called upon to lead it.

ARMY INVOLVEMENT IN THE CCC

But the Army was a reluctant participant in the CCC.

As early as 1930, the General Staff had told congressional leaders it opposed using the Army in any scheme to alleviate unemployment. However, when Congress considered the Couzens Bill in January, 1933, which proposed using the Army to feed, house, and clothe 300,000 unemployed throughout the country, the Chief of Staff, General MacArthur, tasked his

staff to study the Couzens Bill proposals and prepare a plan in the event the Army was formally directed to organize a special corps for the unemployed.

The study noted several reasons why the Army should not participate in a relief program. Besides the logistics problems, the study stressed that "the maintenance of discipline over men not enlisted in the Army or subject to military law would be so great as possibly to discredit the Army."⁷

Fears were voiced of the consequences of relegating defense to a secondary role, and of depleting war reserve supplies and equipment. Certainly, there were fears also of dealing with the type of people who were on the relief roles. The General Staff study and memoranda among the General Staff and between the General Staff and the War Department sometimes showed "how far Army thinking was divorced from the social and economic problems of the country,..."⁸ at that time.

MacArthur, however, was realistic enough to see that with the Roosevelt Administration assuming office within a few weeks, and in spite of the General Staff reservations, the Army would be required to participate in some kind of relief effort. Accordingly, and to MacArthur's credit, he had a plan ready. MacArthur had decided that "Army participation would be decentralized and responsibility and

authority for administration would rest with the nine corps area commanders."⁹

It was the decentralization idea, leaving Army corps area commanders the authority to act as their judgment dictated, which provided the requisite flexibility and resulted in the Army's effective administration of the CCC.

In late March, 1933, when it became a certainty that the Army would be involved, the War Department and the General Staff warmed to the CCC project. Secretary of War George Dern waxed enthusiastic even in a press interview. He said,

The Army has the personnel, officers, and men, who could do this work (organizing the units) without additional expense to the government. It has the posts, buildings and so forth that might well be used for this purpose. It is the cheapest way to do this and will give the Army a peacetime activity of a social nature. I think more or less of a new departure. (sic)¹⁰

To carry out the extensive work of administering the CCC, it was important that the Army understand the program and its goals and exactly what was expected of the Army relative to the enrollees and to other agencies involved in the management of the CCC. Colonel Duncan K. Major, who had written the study of the original Couzens Bill for the Chief of Staff, was key to all the Army participants' gaining that understanding. He personally handled or managed the vast staff work required of the G-3 and G-4 sections concerning the CCC. He directed the efforts of all War Department

agency chiefs and ensured that appropriate guidance went to all corps area commanders and through them to the CCC company commanders. He disseminated the vital organizational information concerning the policy of decentralization. (This key policy may have been his original idea. The Chief of Staff (MacArthur) of course enunciated it).

Conditions were so varied around the country in the different corps areas that autonomous operations were essential. Rigid rules, controls, procedures would have made the problems of building and managing the camps in the varied locations of the high mountains, the deserts, the plains, the swamps and the hills insurmountable.¹¹ Colonel Major ensured orders were sent to clearly spell out the corps area commanders' duties, but which did not preclude their exercise of individual judgment.

The corps area commanders learned that they would be "responsible for the command, housing, supply, feeding, administration, sanitation, medical care, and welfare of the new forest army."¹² Although the corps area commanders were authorized to call up reserve officers for help, they were required to put each 200-man camp under the command of a regular Army officer. "Four Regular Army enlisted men were to be assigned to each camp to act as company first sergeant, supply sergeant, mess sergeant, and cook."¹³

To save money, the corps area commanders were required to use 50 percent of their regular officers on full-time CCC duty before they could call up reserve help. Consequently, most of the Army schools were closed temporarily, and the faculties and student officers went to work in the CCC camps. In addition, officers were borrowed from the Marine Corps and the Navy.¹⁴

Of the 9,936 regular Army officers available for duty on March 31, 1933, 5,239 were assigned to full-time CCC duty. In some corps areas, all the officers were employed in the camps. In one corps area, the CCC needed more officers than the Army corps had and reserves or National Guard officers were called up to fill the gap. In addition, the CCC used 5,000 key enlisted men.¹⁵

INITIAL MOBILIZATION

To meet the President's initial enrollment goal, 250,000 men by early summer, the Army used its standard mobilization and organization system. It processed enrollees at regular induction centers, then put them in 200-man companies which were divided into sections and subsections, similar to platoons and squads in an Army company. The Army transported them to camps and conditioned them in preparation for field work, and they established a chain of command in the camps identical to the military chain of command. Still, the Army was careful not to

"militarize" the enrollees, following MacArthur's instructions not to give military training to them or to subject them to military discipline.¹⁶

The regular Army carried nearly all of the CCC burden for the first six months of the program. But after the initial mobilization and organization work, the regular Army was able to withdraw some of its officers and enlisted men and replace them in the camps with reserve officers and trained CCC enrollees. "By February, 1934, only 537 regular officers remained on full-time duty with the CCC, over five thousand reserve officers had been called up to take the place of the regulars, and enrollees had relieved almost all of the enlisted men."¹⁷ In less than a year from the time of initial involvement, the Continental Army had resumed its regular duties and again had its schools in operation. However, certain sections of the War Department, a few hundred regular officers and enlisted men and the large reserve officer force remained on full-time duty with the CCC until it dissolved in 1942. Most of the reserve officers considered their CCC jobs permanent positions, and many got to stay on until the CCC was abolished in 1942. Minimum tour lengths were six months; about 50 percent of the reservists were rotated every 18 months; about 50 percent remained in their positions for the duration. Some, of course, were removed for cause. As many as 5,900 reserve

officers and 70 warrant officers were in the CCC through the peak years of 1935-1937.¹⁸

The Army's role in the CCC was initially planned to be minimal. After inducting enrollees and conditioning them one month for field work, enrollees were to have been turned over to other departments at the work camps, and that was supposed to have ended the Army's responsibility. The chief forester had originally believed the Forest Service alone could handle the work camps, but soon acknowledged that neither the Forest Service nor the National Park Service could manage the sudden influx of 300,000 men into the forests. Finally, the Army took responsibility for all CCC matters from induction of enrollees, to transporting them to camps, to building and equipping the camps, feeding and paying the men, commanding the CCC companies and all other camp management duties and camp activities except the technical supervision of the work projects, which Department of Agriculture and Department of Interior personnel would do.¹⁹

Considering that all agencies involved with the CCC had to feel their way to mobilize the required resources and to organize work projects and the enrollees in camps around the country, it is remarkable that so much was accomplished in the first 90 days. But achievements were remarkable, and the Army, for its part, now was ready to rest on its

laurels. General MacArthur and Colonel Major felt that the Army had gotten the CCC off to such a good start that it could go on without Army involvement.²⁰ In a letter to the national director, Mr. Fechner, on June 30, 1933, Colonel Major said the Army had accomplished its mission. He boasted some about what the Army had done: 1) The General Staff had demonstrated its planning ability; 2) The Army corps area organization and decentralized management system had proven to be sound policy; 3) The Army had shown how critically important it was to have reserve stocks ready to mobilize for any exigency; 4) The Army had demonstrated that it must have the means and the authority to operate without interference from other government departments.²¹

Unquestionably the Army had made a significant contribution to that point and some self-praise was excuseable. After all, to accomplish its CCC mission, the Army had given up nearly its entire capacity to wage war.²² Fortunately, the international situation of that time posed no threat to the United States.

Mobilization was complete, but the Army's mission in the CCC was by no means over and would not be until 1942. Rather, the Army would have to stay involved with the CCC throughout and at the same time manage to get on with its primary mission -- national defense.

The means for the Army to get back to its primary mission was provided by the authorization to call up reserve officers to manage the CCC camps, as mentioned above. And, in fact, in less than one year from the time of initial involvement, the regular Army had returned in the main to its primary role.²³ Still, the CCC continued to be a major secondary mission for the regular Army, and it managed very well "to perform its two duties simultaneously."²⁴

The Army's initial mobilization and organization efforts were vital to the successful establishment and functioning of the CCC. Writing in Nation the journalist Raymond Swing acknowledged that the Army contributions had made the CCC the "bright jewel" of the New Deal. This high praise was from a man who wanted the Army out of the CCC.²⁵ But the Army would remain involved and would make contributions in the management of the CCC camps, the administration, training, disciplining and caring for the young men which would be even more important. Additionally, the Army's fiscal management and procurement policies for the CCC camps would contribute to business recovery.

CAMP MANAGEMENT AND CAMPLIFE

The first CCC camp was set up by the Army in George Washington National Forest near Luray, Virginia, only 12 days after the CCC had been established by Executive Order.²⁶ Fittingly, it was named "Camp Roosevelt." In

the management of that first camp and all subsequent ones, the Army had almost "carte blanche" authority. Camp regulations were written and issued by the War Department, with the approval of Mr. Fachner, the national director, and the President.²⁷ The Army CCC company commanders organized their camps into "autonomous units with cooks, mess orderlies, clerks, aid men, bakers, tailors, carpenters, and other overhead positions."²⁸

The Army managed virtually every aspect of camp life. From the morning wake up call to the sounding of taps at bedtime, military officers and enlisted men directed or guided or arranged the activities of the enrollees. They fed the men, disciplined and rewarded them, conditioned them, taught them the principles of good citizenship and social responsibility, doctored them, entertained them and paid them.

A day in camp typically began at 6:30 with reveille. After calisthenics, the men had a hearty breakfast. CCC food was plain, but very nourishing and served in large quantities. After breakfast and roll call the enrollees were transported to work areas to labor under their project supervisors. Typical projects included road building, reforestation, bridge building or small dam construction. Enrollees also fought disasters, particularly floods and forest fires. At the end of the work day most camps had

extensive recreational, athletic, and education programs to occupy the men's time if they desired to participate. Enrollees were on the job from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Allowing for travel time, they probably worked about six hours. Lunch was taken to them in the fields. After supper which was from 5 to 5:30 p.m., enrollees were usually free to participate in the extracurricular activities. However, all enrollees had to spend some time on camp duties -- cleaning up or assisting with maintenance or cooking or other chores. Some did clerical work for the Army and for the technical services.²⁹

The system of discipline in the camps was designed so as to preclude any impression that the Army would impose military-like punishment. Instead, a penalty system was established much like that used by the management of industrial concerns.³⁰ For all offenses, hearings were conducted. The progression of penalties according to the seriousness of the offense went from verbal admonishment to suspension of privileges, assignment of camp chores instead of regular project work, pay deductions of as much as three days per month and, finally, discharge. However, a discharge was given only as a last resort. Offenses which did result in discharge were refusal to work, continual, serious misconduct and unwillingness to abide by camp rules. For violations of civil law, enrollees were turned over to civil authorities.³¹

Just as there was a disciplinary system to deal with negative behavior, there was also a reward system to reinforce positive behavior. Camp commanders had the authority from the national director to reward good behavior, good work, and superior service. The most significant rewards were the granting of increased pay and grade. The superior enrollees could be made leaders or assistant leaders. The commander could select five percent of his enrollees for the leadership positions and eight percent for the assistant leadership jobs. The leaders got \$45 per month and the assistant leaders got \$36 per month vice \$30 per month for regular enrollees. The camp commanders used the leaders to assist in command and control of camp activities.³²

The Army also wanted to build character in the young men and make them better citizens by way of some semi-military training.

With the concurrence of the national director the Army required a "uniform standard of excellence" which meant that the enrollees would have to be neat and clean, keep the camp area policed and their equipment orderly. Physical conditioning and marching ("orderly movements") were permitted by the national director and commanders could teach enrollees to show common courtesies and respect for authority, which meant saying "sir" and knocking before

entering an authority's office. The camps were authorized to hold formations at reville and retreat. Camp and personal inspections were permitted each Saturday morning.³²

Apparently, there was not much dissatisfaction among the enrollees with camp discipline and regimentation. Few complaints were mentioned in the numerous personal letters enrollees wrote. Personal testimonies indicate rather that life in the camps was pleasant. The evidence shows that company commanders were mostly fair minded and sensitive to the needs of the enrollees. As an example, one young man reported that after his crew had done a particularly tiresome, dirty job the commander took them to an all night cafe and bought them a dinner.³⁴ Nation reported that on the whole discipline was "admirably handled, to the great credit of the army and the reserve officers."³⁵

Inevitably, there was at least a semblance of military life in the camps, but the Army abided very well by its promise not to militarize the young men.³⁶ The Army had even forbidden rifle shooting lest the wrong impression be given. Clearly parents came to have little concern about their sons being overly disciplined or militarized for, until the end, they urged that their sons be enrolled. For the most part, parents and enrollees alike paid "glowing tributes to the benefits of camp life."³⁶

Life in these camps for the enrollees was better than it had been for them back home. The food and clothing was the best many of them had known in years. Forest life was healthful. Their camp areas were sanitary; they had learned personal hygiene and received medical care from the Army, to include emergency dental work. Personal letters from the enrollees collected in Perry H. Merrill's Roosevelt's Forest Army, bear poignant testimony of how good CCC camp life was for the young men as compared to the hard times they had known.³⁸

The training and education programs conducted in the camps were of infinite value to the boys and ultimately to the nation. Although the Army did not have responsibility to conduct the education program in the camps, Army personnel did aid the appointed advisors.³⁹ A letter from one of the enrollees lauds the value of the education advisor who taught woodcarving, telegraphy, typing, and leathercraft. The Army's more important contribution in CCC education may have been the teaching of human skills: working together, getting along together, respecting property, appreciating order, cleanliness and physical conditioning. One enrollee wrote that "character building was a great part of our inheritance from the C-Cs." (sic) ⁴⁰ Many enrollees became skilled workers because of their jobs in the CCC, and they later contributed to the war effort in war industries or as members of the armed forces.⁴¹ It

would also seem reasonable to conclude that their newly acquired knowledge and skills made them more productive workers and thus greater assets to the economy in general.

The CCC had provided enrollees the opportunity to learn more than 60 major occupations.⁴² The young men had worked hard and rediscovered spirit and pride. Certainly they gained much from the CCC experience and what they gained the nation gained. The nation's most important natural resource, its young men, were reinvigorated. The benefits the nation realized from their new vigor were intangible and mostly incalculable. However, attempts have been made to put a dollar value on their conservation work. Some sources report that the young men advanced conservation programs in America by 25 to 35 years, and that their work has had a lasting "value of more than \$1,750,000,000."⁴³ They built fire towers, truck roads, fire breaks. They planted millions of trees, reclaimed thousands of acres from erosion, built countless federal and state parks and campgrounds, salvaged timber from storm blowdowns, and improved fish and wildlife habitats.⁴⁴

SPECIFIC ECONOMIC EFFECTS

It is in retrospect that the increased wealth of America is appreciated as a result of the conservation work

of the CCC. But the benefits to the depression economy in the 1930s were realized immediately. President Roosevelt was quoted in the New York Times in 1935 as saying that the CCC was responsible for the "quickenning of the business recovery."⁴⁵ And it was the Army's management of CCC fiscal and procurement matters which maximized CCC business activity and dispersed it all over the country.

The management systems of the Army's chief of finance and the quartermaster helped generate the positive economic effects. The chief of finance distributed monthly allotment checks, \$25 out of the \$30 monthly wage paid to enrollees, to the young men's families. By the end of 1934, \$164,000,000 in allotment checks had gone to all parts of the United States.⁴⁶ That money provided an important boost to local economies. In addition, the money which was used to operate the camps and the few dollars paid to enrollees, after the allotment amount was withheld, was spent in the local communities nearest the CCC camps.

The funds for the operation of the CCC were controlled by the Army and suballocated to corps area commanders and camp commanders.⁴⁷ The quartermaster in accordance with the Army's decentralized management policy allowed the camp commander to "local purchase" supplies and equipment of all kinds. All the camps required food, lumber, axes, shovels, trucks and other vehicles and, later,

heavy equipment. The Army Quartermaster Corps in the CCC's first three years estimated that \$96,000,000 in food and \$120,000,000 in clothing and equipment had been procured.⁴⁸ Buying in the towns and cities near the CCC camps, which were scattered all around the country, had a ripple effect in the economy. CCC business generated other business which created jobs.⁴⁹

Although generally the Army was credited with managing CCC affairs with maximum economy⁵⁰, occasionally charges of inefficiency were leveled. For example, it was reported that some camp commanders used more men than seemed necessary on camp details, thus taking them away from productive conservation labor.⁵¹ And the cost per man in the CCC was more than it was in other relief programs, such as the Works Progress Administration. The dollar cost per enrollee as estimated by the Army was \$93 for initial expenses (clothing, transportation, etc.) and \$1.50 a day for food, medical, etc.⁵² Nevertheless, it was money well spent. CCC work endured.

In Pennsylvania alone by 1940, the CCC workers had planted 50,000,000 trees and had built more than 6,300 miles of roads and trails in the forests and parks. They had constructed 98 dams, 86 lookout towers, many small bridges and had applied insecticides or taken other disease control measures over 450,000,000 acres of forest land. Also, the young men had spent 65,000 man days fighting forest

fires.⁵³ Such work was done in every state and in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Hawaii.⁵⁴

CRITICISM OF ARMY ROLE

Because the Army was so thoroughly involved in nearly all aspects of the CCC program, there were plenty of places and opportunities to blunder. The War Department and the Chief of Staff were sensitive to criticism and were keenly aware of their vulnerability in this, the most popular of the New Deal programs. They actively worked to achieve an efficient record in managing the CCC.⁵⁵

There was virtually no criticism of the Army's role in mobilizing and organizing the CCC. There were almost no complaints against the adjutant general, who was responsible for all records of the enrollees and all communications to and from the field and was involved with welfare and education programs. The chief of finance had only a few complaints about the allotments. Some of the enrollees did not want to send \$25 a month home. Even the quartermaster, who historically is under attack from all directions for failing to procure or deliver supplies or for procuring and delivering the wrong supplies, received almost no criticism. The flow of equipment and supplies was appropriate for the camp needs. The only known scandal in procurement for the CCC occurred in May, 1933 and involved the President's secretary, Mr. Louis Howe and the national director, Mr.

Fechner. The scandal was known as the "toilet kit incident." The outcome of it was that the War Department was directed to take a contract for toilet kits at \$1.40 each for the CCC enrollees, when the Army already had a source at 32 cents each.⁵⁶ After a brief Senate investigation, the matter was forgotten.

Considering the scope of the CCC program and the major role that the Army played, it is remarkable that criticism of the Army was so sparse. To reiterate, "In the short span of three months, the CCC had developed from a statutory authorization to the largest peacetime government labor force the United States had ever known."⁵⁷ The Army had put that labor force together, and the Army kept it together, functioning relatively smoothly, from the inception of the CCC in 1933 till its demise in 1942. The Army managed CCC expansion from an enrollment in 1933 of 300,000 to a peak enrollment in 1935 of near 600,000.⁵⁸ Average yearly enrollment to 1937 was 374,000.⁵⁹ After 1937, enrollment began to decline. From the early reforestation, trail cutting and clean up work in the national parks to major construction of roads and public buildings to flood control projects (led/directed by the Army Corps of Engineers)⁶⁰ to fighting forest fires, the Army was there.

To emphasize the paucity of complaints against the Army compared to the great scope of its involvement in the

CCC is not to say that what criticism there was was mild or insignificant. In fact, criticism from some sources was fierce. Even within the Army and the War Department, as reported above, there were those critical of the very idea of having the Army participate in a relief scheme. Some senior officers criticized certain policies concerning camp management, particularly a new War Department policy in 1937 which required the rotation of the reserve officer camp commander not later than every 18 months.

The quartermaster general and the chief of finance predicted that such personnel turnovers would result in inefficiencies in procurement and that turmoil and various other difficulties would ensue.⁶¹ However, the worst effect of this policy was that a serious rift developed between the national director, Mr. Fechner, who opposed the policy, and the War Department -- a rift which never healed. Fechner wanted the reserve officers who were commanding the camps to stay on for the duration. He believed that stability of leadership meant greater efficiency and higher morale in the camps. The military, however, wanted to rotate reserve officers every 18 months at the latest. The Army considered CCC command the best field experience the reservists could get, and wanted the maximum number to have the opportunity. Finally, a compromise was reached which permitted the War Department to replace 50 percent of the

reserve officers. The compromise was not satisfactory to either side. Business went on but not as usual in the CCC hierarchy, although camp business seemed to be unaffected.⁶²

In at least one state, Pennsylvania, some influential people were unhappy with the way the Army ran their CCC program. Apparently, some Pennsylvania state officials felt that "...when trouble bubbled to the surface in the administration of this otherwise placid agency, the Army was usually involved."⁶³ Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr. wrote in the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography that the Army not only was in conflict with state officials but also created problems within the confines of the CCC camps; i.e., the Army caused friction in the education program; unsuccessfully conducted the reconditioning program; failed to provide adequate transportation for enrollees; arbitrarily recruited enrollees, frustrating local relief agencies; was uncooperative with enrollees in allotment disputes; caused dissensions by poor camp management, which meant providing bad food, allowing dirty quarters, permitting hazing and thievery; and demonstrated a racist attitude by limiting black enrollments.⁶⁴ After Hendrickson reported all of these criticisms of the Army, he pointed out that the evidence did not appear to support the charges, but he said the investigation of all the complaints was done by the

Army. In an attempt to be fair, however, Handrickson cited personal testimony from enrollees which refuted the complaints.

Unquestionably, though, the Army deserved some criticism. Most complaints centered on: (1) the education program, (2) safety problems and (3) militarism. Concerning education, the Army did not favor formal classroom schooling for the enrollees. They did not want "long haired men and short haired women" in the camps teaching radical ideas. Early on, the camp commanders had sole authority over the education program, and they preferred that enrollees' education be limited to training on the job. They did not believe that enrollees would want to sit in a classroom at night after a day's work in the field. Finally, the Army agreed to changes in the education program, and civilian educational advisors were assigned to the camps in June 1934. Still, camp commanders had final authority over the schooling, and the success of the program depended on the individual commander's attitude toward it.⁶⁵

Certainly that attitude was very positive in some corps areas. General George Marshall, who had responsibility at one time for 35 camps, said that education was the most important part of the CCC program.⁶⁶

Concerning safety, there were many injuries and several deaths in the CCC camps every year. In 1936, according to the Army Navy Register, 79 enrollees died.

Forty-five of the deaths were due to disease (pneumonia accounted for 14), and 34 were due to injuries. Of the number killed, 18 died in automobile, motorcycle and truck accidents. One died by suffocation, one by a fall, one in a railroad accident, one in a blasting accident, one was killed by a falling tree and three by accidental gunshot wounds. There were two suicides and six homicides.⁶⁷ Of course, it was the preventable kinds of accidents that earned the Army its criticism.

In one of the CCC's more tragic accidents, eight young men died while fighting a forest fire in Pennsylvania on October 19, 1938. The youngest of the group had managed to enroll in the CCC even though he was only 16 years old, and his death occurred just two weeks after his enrollment. An inquiry led to the conclusion that "unintentional laxity and negligence contributed to the deaths."⁶⁸ Certainly these accidents indicated that the CCC's safety program was less than effective, but things were worse in the first year of the CCC before any safety program was established.

A safety program, strongly supported by the War Department, but opposed by the national director because of excessive costs, was in fact approved on April 9, 1934. A CCC safety division was set up. Safety representatives visited each camp and checked equipment for safety hazards and taught enrollees accident prevention techniques and safe work practices.⁶⁹ By June, 1936, in part because of the

safety program, the death rate in the CCC camps had been reduced below that in the regular Army. It was brought even lower than the rate among men of the same age group throughout the country.⁷⁰

Concerning charges of militarism, there was some reason to be suspicious of the Army. Organized labor expressed this fear when the CCC was being organized. Later, radicals, the more liberal press, individuals and peace groups attacked the Army on charges of militarizing the CCC youth as was happening in Hitler's Labor Service in Nazi Germany. Some military leaders did not help allay those fears. General George Van Horn Moseley, Commander of Fourth Corps Area, spoke out in favor of militarizing the CCC.⁷¹ The Secretary of War, Henry H. Woodring, added to the fears when he called the CCC enrollees "economic storm troops." In an article he wrote for Liberty Magazine he suggested total military control of the CCC.⁷² Even Colonel Major, who had worked around this sensitive issue earlier, proposed in 1936 to support legislation to have a permanent CCC with military training required. He wanted the War Department to have absolute authority over the CCC vice a civilian director. He suggested a term of enrollment of four years, one of which would be served in the CCC and three would be in a "semi-military CCC reserve."⁷³ However, the Army Chief of Staff was enough in tune with the mood of the country to

know that militarism of the CCC was taboo. As mentioned above, rifle shooting was forbidden in the camps to preclude even giving the impression of military training. There were virtually no complaints from enrollees about military training. One enrollee, Thomas W. Scott of Zanesville, Ohio, wrote concerning the rumors of military training in the camps, "Emphatically...there is not."⁷⁴

Actually, because the Army had won the public's trust and, too, because of the winds of war in Europe, Americans by 1938 favored military training in the CCC. A Gallup Poll in that year reported that 75 percent of respondents favored it. Later polls showed 90 percent in favor.⁷⁵ By 1940, enrollees were trained in the camps in noncombat skills, such as truck driver, radio operator, cook, baker, administrative clerk, which were vital to the war effort.⁷⁶ Still, the Army refrained from any training which could be construed as purely military.

By 1939 as the economy was surging due to world events, the CCC was less useful. It was no longer needed to provide employment for the youth or to spur the economy. In fact, there were complaints that the CCC was drawing needed labor away from industry and agriculture. The youth were also losing interest. Enrollments declined and desertions increased. By the end of 1941, there were only 150,000

enrollees in 900 camps, down from an average yearly enrollment of about 300,000 in about 1,640 camps in previous years. Still, parents were urging their sons to enroll. The CCC had won that kind of popularity for a number of reasons, but especially because of its character-building capability.

Former enrollees were also about in the country singing the praises of the CCC and the opportunity it had opened to them. They hated to let it die.⁷⁷ A New York Times editorial called the camps worthwhile for various reasons "and would urge their continuance even in good times."⁷⁸ But as the United States entered World War II, the CCC certainly was not needed. Because it did not seem to serve a vital purpose any longer, charges of "waste" were made against the CCC. Ironically, the CCC which had been created to save natural and human resources and which had produced such important results was disbanded to save money.⁷⁹

After considerable debate in the Congress about its continuance, the House voted on June 5, 1942, not to appropriate any more money for the CCC. Instead, a liquidation budget was approved, and the Senate concurred with the House action on June 30, 1942. Thus, the CCC project was ended.⁸⁰

The CCC had served its purpose well. It left lasting monuments to itself in the hills and plains all across America. Those who had participated in it could feel justifiably proud. Dr. Howard W. Oxley, Director of CCC Education, said that because of the great efforts of the United States Army which had led the CCC from beginning to end, the lives of millions had been transformed.⁸¹ The Army's work with the CCC certainly has to rank among its great contributions to the nation.

SUMMARY

The nation's economic condition was about as bad as it could be in 1933. A primary purpose of the CCC was to provide unemployment relief and to spur business activity to bolster the economy. There was plenty of opportunity for the Army to make a contribution via its involvement in the CCC.

The Army mobilized the entire CCC project and organized it administratively and functionally from top to bottom. The Army managed the camps, fed, clothed, housed, transported, doctored, paid, disciplined, rewarded, trained and entertained the enrollees. The military camp commanders helped instill pride in the young men and helped them to learn social responsibility, helped them to learn to live in the company of other men, and helped them to learn to work together as a team. In a sense, it was the militarism in

the camps, which had been so feared initially by the public, that built character in the youth. Ultimately, the enrollees returned to their homes to be better and more productive citizens as a result of the military-like training they had received. The evidence of that result was given in the letters from the enrollees, referenced above.

The military contributed to the CCC and to the economy by its decentralized procurement policy which helped generate business activity all over the country. The Army contributed to the economy via the CCC by its efficient allotment of enrollees' pay. The Army finance officer's automatic allotment system sent most of the enrollees' pay by monthly check to their families back home. The millions of dollars every month distributed in hundreds of cities and towns all across America spurred the economy in a myriad of ways. Namely, buying and consumption occurred which required new production which required more jobs in manufacturing and services. The economic effects were immediate and positive and they grew geometrically. By 1935, Business Week reported that the CCC camps were the bright spots on the business maps of hundreds of communities.⁸²

Inevitably, the Army drew some criticism for its management of the CCC program. Some citizens complained to the end about militarism, the conduct of the education

program and the lack of an effective safety training program in the camps. There were some charges of waste and inefficiency. It was noted that the cost per enrollee in the CCC was more than the cost per enrollee in any other relief program. However, it appears that CCC work had a greater payback in the economy in the short run and that completed conservation projects had an enduring value of incalculable worth to the nation in the long run. All criticism was mild compared to the high praise the Army got for its management of the CCC. The Army was actually credited with doing an efficient job in the CCC, conducting the program with "maximum economy."⁸³

The evidence shows that the net effect of the Army's involvement in the CCC was positive for the CCC, and, although effects were indirect, they were very positive also for the economy. Tangible and intangible benefits were immeasurable.

Besides the pride of accomplishment and the satisfaction of a job well done, one might wonder what the Army's involvement in the CCC meant to the Army, i.e., what contributions did the CCC make to the Army? The next chapter will attempt to answer that question.

CHAPTER 3 ENDNOTES

- 1 Salmond, p. 4.
- 2 William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (1963): pp. 1-3; and oral history related by Sarah Melvina Brennan.
- 3 Salmond, pp. 3-4.
- 4 John Kazerian, "The Starvation Army," Nation 136 (April 12, 1933): pp. 396-398 and (April 19, 1933): pp. 443-445 and (April 25, 1933): pp. 472-473.
- 5 Leuchtenburg, p. 39.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Killigrew, p. X11-12.
- 8 Ibid., p. X11-15.
- 9 Ibid., p. X11-6.
- 10 Ibid., p. X11-10.
- 11 Johnson, pp. 5-12.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid., p. 13 and Merrill, p. 9.
- 15 Johnson, p. 13.
- 16 Ibid., p. 14.
- 17 Ibid., p. 18.
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- 19 Johnson, p. 93 and Killigrew, pp. X11-12-17.
- 20 Killigrew, p. X11-25-27.
- 21 Army and Navy Journal (July 8, 1933): p. 889 and Killigrew, p. X11-26-27.

22 Killigrew, p. X11-9; Johnson, p. 14; and ARSW (1933): pp. 8-9.

23 Johnson, p. 18.

24 Ibid., p. 17.

25 Raymond Gram Swing, "Take the Army Out of the CCC," Nation 141 (October 23, 1935): p. 459.

26 Alfred C. Oliver, Jr. and Howard M. Dudley, This New America (1937): p.22.

27 Johnson, p. 30 (Hereinafter cited as Johnson Dissertation).

28 Killigrew, p. X11-13.

29 Hendrickson, pp. 73-74 and Merrill, p. 14.

30 Charles W. Johnson "The Army and the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942," Prologue: The Journal of the National Archives 4 (Fall, 1972): p. 156. (Hereinafter cited as Johnson, Prologue).

31 Killigrew, X111-12-20.

32 Rosenman, p. 109.

33 Killigrew, X111-19-20.

34 Ibid., p. 103.

35 Swing, p. 459.

36 Ibid.

37 Salmond, p. 192.

38 Extracts from over 300 enrollee letters are printed in Merrill, pp. 55-106 and many others in Oliver and Dudley, pp. 65-110 which attest to the good life in the camps and to the benefits of CCC service.

39 Merrill, p. 19.

40 Ibid., p. 104.

41 Ibid., p. 45.

42 Oliver and Dudley, p. 27.

- 196.
- 43 Report of the national director in Merrill, p.
- 44 Merrill, p. vii.
- 45 New York Times (March 24, 1935): Section IV,
p. 8.
- 46 New York Times (Jan. 1, 1935): p. 29.
(Actually reported as \$164 million per month, but computations
show figure should have been \$164 million in 20 months).
- 47 Johnson Dissertation, p. 21.
- 48 Merrill, p. 18.
- 49 Ibid., p. vii.
- 50 Killigrew, p. X111-25.
- 51 Merrill, p. 4.
- 52 Killigrew, p. X11-15 and Hendrickson, p. 96.
- 53 Hendrickson, p. 96.
- 54 Merrill, pp. 15, 32.
- 55 Killigrew, p. X111-24-25.
- 56 Salmond, pp. 44-45.
- 57 Ibid., p. 45.
- 58 Merrill, p. 8.
- 59 Ibid., p. 16.
- 60 Ibid., pp. 22-24.
- 61 Johnson Dissertation, p. 73 and Salmond, pp.
172-180.
- 62 Johnson Dissertation, pp. 68-76 and Salmond, pp.
172-180.
- 63 Hendrickson, p. 68.
- 64 Ibid., pp. 68, 72, 74, 76, 78, & 83.
- 65 Salmond, pp. 47-54.

66 Larry I. Bland and Sharon K. Ritenour, eds.,
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p. 658.

- 67 Army and Navy Register (Feb. 6, 1937): p. 9.
- 68 Hendrickson, p. 81.
- 69 Salmond, p. 35.
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- 71 Ibid., pp. 85-86.
- 72 Ibid., pp. 116-117.
- 73 Killigrew, p. X111-34.
- 74 Oliver and Dudley, p. 95.
- 75 New York Times (June 2, 1940): p. 19.
- 76 Hendrickson, p. 93.
- 77 Salmond, p. 192.
- 78 New York Times (March 24, 1935): p. 16.
- 79 Hendrickson, p. 95.
- 80 Salmond, pp. 208-217.
- 81 Oliver and Dudley, p. xvii.
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- 83 Killigrew, p. X111-25.

CHAPTER 4

CCC EFFECTS ON THE ARMY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

STATUS OF THE ARMY IN 1933

To appreciate the negative and positive effects that the CCC had on the Army and national defense, it is well to know the status of the Army when it became involved in the CCC in 1933. The Army's status and national defense capability at that time were due not only to the onset of the Great Depression, but also evolved from a historical perception of the need for military preparedness in America. The need was viewed very differently by military leaders and the public.

The concept of preparedness to military leaders has meant having sufficient troop strength, modern equipment, a large, well trained reserve force and a military budget appropriation adequate to finance these requirements. Every chief of staff has outlined defense needs in his annual report to the secretary of war.¹ The more of each need met the better prepared the military would be to carry out its primary mission of preserving the peace by being prepared for war. As the first commander-in-chief, George Washington, said in 1790, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."² To the military men, the need to be prepared is always keen and urgent because the threat to national security is ever

present in a world of contending ideologies and economic jealousies.

However, the civilian populace generally has had little concern about external threats during peacetime. The people have cared little for military preparedness. Americans have considered their own military as only a stand-by defense force in peacetime. The felt need has been for a skeleton professional Army, the smaller and the less expensive the better.³

Notwithstanding strong and cogent arguments for greater preparedness from military leadership, the will of the people as expressed by Congress has been to curtail defense spending and to limit active duty forces.

According to General Emory Upton, writing in 1881, the United States had entered every conflict up to that time unprepared. Heeding none of Upton's advice, America also entered the Spanish-American War of 1898 ill-prepared and confused. The mobilization effort smacked of comedy. United States armed forces managed to blunder through that war, because somehow the enemy blundered worse.⁴

Again, putting the lesson of unpreparedness behind them, the armed forces were less ready for World War I when America declared war in April, 1917, than for any previous conflict.⁵

After a world war in which America learned that unpreparedness had resulted in an extravagant waste of money

and lives, one would think that at last "preparedness" would be the watchword of national defense policy. However, World War I had been the "war to end all wars." Thus, the public would not be convinced that it needed a strong defense force. Consequently, America's military power was allowed to deteriorate. The Army underwent an almost continuous weakening from the end of World War I in November, 1918, until about 1935. At the end of 1918, the Army was at wartime strength, 3,710,563 men on active duty. But looking at 1920 for comparison, a year after World War I demobilization was completed, personnel strength was at 204,292. By the end of 1934 strength was down to 138,464. The Army budget in 1920 was \$1,621,953,000, and by the end of 1934, it was only \$408,587,000.⁶

After World War I, foreign debts and trade rivalries presented the United States its keenest liability for war, and thus its most urgent need for a strong military.⁷ The National Defense Act of 1920 indeed provided for a strong Army. Still, Congress and the public would not fund a large standing Army.

By 1929, recognizing public sentiment and attempting to deal with an economy minded Congress, Army Chief of Staff General Charles Sumnerall said that the principle of preparedness would be to maintain a small, highly trained force for emergency defense and to serve as a cadre to

train, mobilize and flesh out a larger force for war if a situation should arise.⁸

However, Sumnerall's minimal requirements would not be funded either. So in the early 1930s, the Army condition went from bad to worse.⁹ Although the National Defense Act of 1920 had authorized a Regular Army of nearly 300,000, Congress limited strength year by year until in 1933 it was cut to 135,000, including the new Army Air Corps. The United States Army was reduced in size to seventeenth among the standing armies of the world.¹⁰ And the new administration taking office in March 1933 wanted to reduce Army strength even further.

General Douglas MacArthur had replaced Sumnerall as Chief of Staff in 1930, and he strongly fought reductions. He won some modest victories for fiscal year 1934. A proposed cut in the already approved Army budget which would have been "a stunning blow to national defense"¹¹ was not made in full. Still, the situation was nearly as bad as it could be for national defense in the view of the Chief of Staff. In his report that year to the secretary of war, General MacArthur said "...the Army's strength in personnel and materiel and its readiness to employment are below the danger line."¹²

In another assessment of Army status, it was reported that it had reached rock bottom by fiscal year 1933. The Army had only about 1,000 tanks, all of which

were obsolete; 1,509 aircraft, the fastest of which could fly only 234 miles per hour; and a single mechanized regiment led by cavalymen on horses.¹³

When President Roosevelt signed the executive order on April 5, 1933, commencing the CCC project, the status of the Army was abysmally weak. MacArthur considered that the military had been reduced to a "caretaking establishment."¹⁴ The issue for the Army had become "...not how to obtain the maximum security with the available funds, but how to minimize insecurity during a period of stringent financial crisis."¹⁵

As the CCC mobilization got underway, the budget battle for fiscal year 1934 was at peak intensity. On March 3, 1933, the day before Roosevelt's inauguration, the Congress had approved an appropriation of \$270,000,000 for Army military activities. But the new administration's Director of the Bureau of the Budget Lewis Douglas proposed a cut of \$90,000,000. In addition to the budget cut, President Roosevelt considered furloughing 3,000 to 4,000 regular officers. MacArthur was so angered by the proposed cuts that he threatened to resign his commission and take the issue of national defense to the people in speeches across the country.¹⁶ Secretary of War George Dern supported MacArthur in his efforts to get the funds reinstated. Finally, the President decided to support a military appropriation of \$225,000,000, and he dropped plans

to furlough any officers. John Killigrew, a student of the depression era Army, noted that the President's decision came just at the time June 10, 1933 when the Army was becoming more involved with the CCC.¹⁷ This may have been the first significant positive effect that the CCC had on the Army.

Perhaps because of the CCC, the military budget blow was softened and the officer reduction plan was forgotten, but still a \$45,000,000 chop, though not as terrible as \$90,000,000, represented a potentially serious loss in national defense capability.¹⁸ The secretary of war said that the cut to \$225,000,000 meant curtailments in living expenses, materiel, training activities, and overhead civilian personnel. It omitted regular Army field training, target practice, flying training, reequipment programs, and research and development. National Guard drills would have to be reduced and the Reserve Officer Training Corps program would be cut back, and only one-third of the ROTC cadets would receive summer training.¹⁹

It would seem that the Army was hardly in any condition to take on the responsibility of the CCC. Nevertheless, as chapter two pointed out, the Army did participate in the CCC in a major way from beginning to end. In fact, after the first few days of the mobilization and organization effort, the President "...directed the Army, to assume, under the general supervision of the Director of the

Civilian Conservation Corps, complete and permanent control of the CCC project, except for the functions of selecting recruits and supervising technical work in the forests."²⁰ The Army's contribution to the CCC, as documented above, and as reported in Nation magazine in October, 1935, helped make the CCC the "bright jewel" of the New Deal. Without the Army "...the camps could not have had so great a success."²¹

Could the same thing be said about the CCC's effect on the Army in the 1930s? There is evidence which says that the Army and national defense were negatively affected by the Army's participation in the CCC. For example, a confidential report of the inspector general to the chief of staff on September 8, 1933, said if the Army's involvement in the CCC continued in the same way for one year then the Army would not be able to meet an enemy.²² Contrarily, other evidence indicates that the CCC experience was the best thing that could have happened to the Army at that time. As noted above, the Army was spared regular officer reductions and even deeper budget cuts because the President wanted the Army's full cooperation and wholehearted support of the CCC project.

Other evidence of positive effects was brought out. As Congress debated abolishing the CCC in June, 1942, the New York Times summarized contributions the CCC had made to the Army and to the war effort. The article stressed

readiness and the successful execution of war. It is also their responsibility not to do those things between wars which would degrade readiness. As Alexander Hamilton wrote in The Federalist, "A nation despicable by its weakness, forfeits even the privilege of being neutral."²⁵ The Chief of Staff, agreeing with that dictum sounded a warning to the nation about how seriously the Army had been weakened by its involvement in the CCC. MacArthur pointed out that the use of the Army in the emergencies of peace could not justify the continual neglect of the defense mission.²⁶

Looking back on the Army's involvement in the CCC, historian Russell F. Weigley said that the disruption of the Army's already feeble formations and the diversions from military tasks detracted from defense preparedness.²⁷

It is certainly true that regular Army activities were temporarily relegated to second place as priority was given to the CCC program. The immediate effect was to restrict national defense capabilities and limit military training. But this effect would be only temporary. As MacArthur had said, the Army had been weakened because so many officers and men had been taken away from essential military duties to administer the CCC camps.²⁸ But this situation was alleviated in just a few months, as reserve officers were called up to take over the CCC camps. By

defense training of CCC enrollees and of Army reserve officers. The enrollees had been trained in the habits and routines of soldiers, the discipline of living in camps as soldiers have to do, and in skills necessary in the Army: cooking, truck driving, army style clerical work, road building, carpentry, bridge construction, motor repair -- all skills directly useful in military service or war industries.²³ According to Representative John W. McCormack, during the debate of June, 1942, to abolish the CCC, the Army had been very pleased with the CCC's effect on national defense, and he insisted that "...the War Department wanted the Corps retained."²⁴

The remainder of this chapter will be concerned with the specific effects of the CCC on the Army and/or national defense. Negative effects will be reported first, then positive effects. Finally, a net effect will be deduced.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE CCC ON THE ARMY

The Army's participation in the CCC had negative effects on Army training, morale and enlistments. Taken together this meant a negative effect on national defense capability. Army leaders had predicted that the Army's participation in the CCC would have such negative effects. Consequently, senior officers vigorously argued against Army involvement.

It is a primary responsibility of military leaders to do those things between wars that will contribute to

October, 1933, enough regular officers had been replaced so that military schools could be put back in operation. By the end of fiscal year 1934 only 498 regular officers remained on duty in the CCC camps, and the number of reserves had increased to 5,853.²⁹

Nevertheless, throughout the years of involvement in the CCC, many Army leaders were always eager to be done with that relief program altogether and get back to their primary job. Some senior officers would never be convinced that non-defense roles for the military could ever have other than a negative influence on defense capability.³⁰

It would seem that the Army would have looked forward to the favorable publicity to be gained from being a participant in a program to help the nation in economic and social fields in peacetime.³¹ But some military leaders opposed Army participation just on principle. They evidently considered their participation in a relief scheme for the unemployed as beneath them. Major General Preston Brown, Commanding General of the Army First Corps, did not want the Army involved in any non-military duties.³² The General Staff felt that the fight against unemployment should not be a direct concern of the Army.³³ Many officers regarded the CCC as "...an unwelcome chore, outside the proper interests of professional fighting men."³⁴ General Curtis Lemay, a Captain in 1933, has written in recent years that he would have done anything to get out

of CCC duty. He said it was "quite a come-down -- to be pulled out of the sky, and sent off to a rustic site...to look after the needs of the CCC boys." Lemay's resentment was apparently deep seated, as he pointed out, "We were GI pilots, not a bunch of damn chaperones," or "glorified housekeepers."³⁵

While officer pride was hurt by this "unwelcome chore," the morale of enlisted men was negatively affected because the CCC enrollees were paid more than Army privates. The pay differential also hurt enlistments. A letter from the Second Corps Area Commander to the adjutant general's office complained about the problem. The letter pointed out that enlisted men were distressed at seeing a CCC enrollee get \$30.00 a month when an Army private received only \$17.85 a month. Enlistments fell off because young men were more interested in the higher pay in the CCC.³⁶

General George C. Marshall, then a Colonel, wrote on April 13, 1924, that regular soldiers were not able to send "allotments of \$10 a month to their parents, while CCC boys, picked up off the streets, were enabled to contribute from \$25.00 to \$40.00 a month to their families."³⁷ Marshall noted that soldiers had to stick with their CCC duty whether they liked it or not, and CCC boys could walk away anytime. Furthermore, enrollees did not work more than six hours a day, whereas soldiers were on duty in the CCC camps for 12 hours a day. "Despite the inequalities and injustice of

this arrangement, the regular soldiers gave their earnest and most efficient services to make the CCC a success..."38

The depression had at first been an enlistment bonanza for the Army. Young men flocked to the recruiting offices wanting a regular job. With so many applicants, the Army could be selective. Thus, the Army raised mental and physical enlistment standards. But as the CCC and other relief programs competed to enroll young men, the Army found itself with problems. The number of applicants diminished, and the Army was stuck with its higher physical and mental standards. Obviously, fewer of the already reduced manpower pool could qualify for Army service.³⁹

Army recruiting problems were further exacerbated when the White House put CCC camps off limits to Army recruiters. The intention was to preclude public criticism of militarism and charges that the CCC was used as a feeder for the military services. The effect of the policy was to curtail Army recruitment. In 1936 competition from the CCC prevented the Army from meeting recruiting quotas. The result was that the Army ended up 6,000 men under authorized strength.⁴⁰

When an athlete is not training, muscles atrophy, and he cannot instantly get ready for competition. Likewise, in the early months of the Army's involvement in the CCC, regular "training had been suspended and the normal

maintenance and increase of military efficiency had been curtailed."⁴¹ The Chief of Staff had often spoken of the value of formal schooling to the professional development of his officers.⁴² Yet, this training virtually ceased in the spring of 1933. Branch schools were closed and 60 percent of the staff and faculty were used in CCC mobilization.⁴³ Although some favorable comments were made about the training Army officers got in the CCC, the Chief of Staff, in 1937, thought it was just administrative and would not be very helpful in a military mobilization.⁴⁴ MacArthur's wish was always to get out of the CCC as soon as possible so the Army could get on with its training and primary mission without interference.⁴⁵

Just as he recognized the negative impact on national defense of taking the Army away from its primary duty, so too did General MacArthur note the potential value of the manpower pool of the CCC to national defense. In early 1935, MacArthur wanted to initiate some sort of voluntary military training in the CCC camps to capitalize on this resource.⁴⁶ He abandoned his plan though, understanding the public's aversion to the idea of militarizing the CCC. MacArthur's thinking on the matter showed that he believed the CCC could have positive effects on the Army and on national defense.

POSITIVE EFFECTS ON THE ARMY.

All of the complaints about the negative effects of the CCC on the Army notwithstanding, Colonel Duncan Major reported to the Chief of Staff in the fall of 1935 that the corps area commanders and their subordinates wanted to stay involved. Major said the Army's participation in the CCC was not interfering with training in the regular Army or in the civilian components. Furthermore, he said the CCC experience was excellent training for the reserves.⁴⁷

Although Colonel Lawrence Halstead, acting chief of infantry at Fort Screven, (like many other Army officers) considered the CCC work distasteful because it was not really military work, he wrote to Marshall, "I feel that [the CCC] is the salvation of the Army...I have noticed a cessation of talk of reducing the Army by four thousand officers since we started in on the conservation work."⁴⁸ It is certain that the Army's involvement in the CCC prevented Congress' cutting military appropriations and reducing officer strength. In view of that, Colonel Halstead's characterization of the CCC project as the "salvation" of the Army was not overstated.

The Army's participation in the CCC program had good results not only in terms of manpower and appropriations, but also in many other respects. There were specific positive effects for the Army and defense capability in general. The Army's public image was improved, and there

were numerous attendant rewards, such as recognition for individual officers who commanded the camps. The reserve officer force realized a number of benefits; the CCC was a boon to the Chaplain Corps; it advanced conservation work on military installations, and improved training grounds, facilities and services; military training of various kinds was enhanced; CCC training developed a civilian manpower pool with war production skills and noncombat military skills. The national director of the CCC, Robert Fechner, said that the CCC boys, because of their camp training and discipline, were "85 percent prepared for military life" and could be "turned into first-class fighting men at almost an instant's notice."⁴⁹ It would appear that the CCC experience helped make America better prepared for World War II, more ready than in any previous prewar period.⁵⁰

As an indication of how the CCC helped prepare Americans for World War II on a personal level, George B. Kibler, a World War II veteran, wrote: "The CCC's helped when I entered the service because it taught me how to work as a team with other men and, of course, the routine basic training helped."⁵¹

When an Army is not training in the field, practicing tactical maneuvers and weapons employment, its readiness deteriorates. That is what MacArthur was talking about when he pointed out that the Army's involvement in the

CCC had brought regular Army training to a standstill, and "has almost destroyed the readiness of units for immediate and effective employment on emergency duty."⁵²

However, there is military training other than field training which is vital to the preparation of an Army for war. Mobilization training, for example, is of such vital importance. It turned out for the Army that the "mobilization of the CCC was a rehearsal for World War II."⁵³ The Army practiced many of its wartime duties with the CCC. As General George C. Marshall said, "the CCC...was a chance for the regular Army to do in peacetime something of what it was trained to do in war - to mobilize, organize, and administer a civilian force."⁵⁴ The General Staff said military planning in the 1930s was based on the rapid mobilization of men and resources to repel any threat. Their theory held that "the greatest safety factor in the American defense strategy was the proper manning of the mobilization plan with officers and men."⁵⁵ The CCC mobilization certainly was the Army's best opportunity to see if it could man the mobilization system and test the efficiency of the plan. Speaking of the mobilization of the CCC in the Army and Navy Journal on July 8, 1933, Colonel Duncan Major said it was the Army's most valuable experience since the World War.⁵⁶

Although there had been complaints about the CCC taking the Army away from its primary duty and weakening

national defense, in the final analysis the CCC had been a golden learning opportunity for the Army. National defense was actually enhanced. General Marshall wrote, "I found the CCC the most instructive service I have ever had..."⁵⁷ Marshall noted that the Army learned about simplification and decentralization by managing the CCC program.⁵⁸ The Army had learned to carry out dual roles simultaneously by using reserves.⁵⁹ Even Curtis Lemay admitted he learned about leadership, "good old-fashioned Moral 'Ssasion."⁶⁰ He noted he had to learn to lead rather than drive because he did not have military authority. General Hap Arnold reported that the air corps learned much from working human relations and administrative problems in the CCC camps at March Field, California.⁶¹ It was an opportunity also for Arnold "to preach air corps doctrine to three thousand potential soldiers."⁶²

The young CCC camp commanders learned to improvise for refrigeration of meats and other perishables. They built field iceboxes and dug cellars. They negotiated local purchases of fresh meats and vegetables.⁶³ They learned to deal with morale problems because many camps were in remote, depressing places. The camp commanders provided entertainment, good food, athletic competition, and arranged visits to town on the weekend. They provided for the warmth and general comfort of the enrollees.⁶⁴ These

experiences would have application on the battlefield at another time.

The example set by camp commanders and regular Army soldiers impressed the CCC enrollees and encouraged in them a desire for military life.⁶⁵ At least 2,500,000 young men of military age learned to live in the company of other men in Army-like conditions. They learned to take directions, learned about sanitation, first aid, and personal hygiene.⁶⁶ The national director reported in 1942 that many young men had been trained as workers in defense industries or as specialists in the armed forces. Of 540,958 men enrolled in the CCC in fiscal year 1941, 390,000 completed their training and took jobs in defense industries, on farms, in business or entered the armed services; and 63,291 took jobs or entered the armed services before completing their enrollment terms. Many who entered the armed services had received training as bakers, cooks, radio operators or truck drivers.⁶⁷ The Army, in effect, had grown its own recruits for World War II.

To recapitulate, the Army had realized many positive benefits for itself and national defense as a result of its involvement in the CCC. The Army had practiced its rapid mobilization plan, had gained experience in training, organizing, supervising, supplying and leading. And it had gained a manpower pool with experience and skills which

would be of great value in World War II. The evidence indicates that the positive effects far outweighed the negative effects. Even the training of the Army, about which General MacArthur had been so concerned, was regarded by Secretary of War George Dern as very satisfactory.⁶⁸

Dern also said that President Roosevelt rated training satisfactory. The most glowing commentary on the value of the CCC experience to the Army came from Colonel Duncan Major. After his fall, 1935, inspection trip through the CCC camps, Colonel Major recommended to the Chief of Staff that every junior officer of the Army, regular and reserve, should have a six-month tour with the CCC because "no better opportunity is presented in time of peace for practical leadership, administration, and supply, and the development of leadership and initiative." ⁶⁹

The Army enjoyed a most favorable public image during the period of its involvement in the CCC. The Army was popularized as an efficient branch of service and the Army officer was well regarded in the public eye.⁷⁰

Some senior officers had recognized that the Army's participation in a relief effort would be "a source of friendly and useful advertising for the Army both before Congress and the public."⁷¹ The Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Van Horne Moseley, said, "The Army is complemented (sic) when people turn to us to solve problems..."⁷²

The Army's involvement in the CCC also helped to develop cordial and cooperative relations between the War Department and other government agencies. But paperwork problems highlighted the inadequacies of the Department's administrative machinery to cope with crises. Colonel Major had discovered that he had to bypass normal channels and rely on informal arrangements to get administrative matters worked out for the CCC. Unfortunately, the War Department would do nothing about its bureaucratic morass until forced to by the events of World War II.⁷⁴

At least in part because the Army had won a favorable public image and in part because of the winds of war in Europe, the American public favored making the CCC camps military training camps. A 1938 Gallup Poll said 75 percent of Americans favored military training in the camps. By 1941, about 90 percent favored it.⁷⁵

Possibly also because of the Army's favorable image as a result of the CCC project, Congress passed the Selective Service and Training Act on September 16, 1940. This act authorized the first peacetime draft in American history.⁷⁶ This conscription authorization very definitely had a positive effect on Army readiness.

The development of the CCC was a significant event for the Army chaplaincy. Although "the CCC was not designed to save the chaplaincy,...it certainly helped."⁷⁷ The

public wanted religious services provided for the CCC boys. Military leaders also cared about the spiritual life of the enrollees. Army officers have historically looked out for the religious needs of their men. General Marshall has said that the spiritual life of the soldier is more important than his equipment. Marshall believed that spiritual morale "wins the victory in the ultimate..."⁷⁸

The CCC represented a new need for chaplains at a time when the officer corps was being threatened with cuts. Regular Army chaplains may have been the first to go. Their authorized strength in 1933 was only 125. Over 300 chaplains were needed for the CCC. By 1936, 338 reserve chaplains had been called to active duty with the CCC.⁷⁹ They served tours of 18 to 24 months and rendered invaluable services. They often served simultaneously in several capacities, e.g., as education officers and athletic directors.⁸⁰ The CCC chaplains reminded the nation of its need for a chaplain corps as an important contribution to national defense.

General MacArthur said that the 1933 mobilization proved the need for and the value of an efficient body of commissioned reserves.⁸¹ At least 20,000 and maybe as many as 30,000 reserve officers had active duty experience with the CCC.⁸² The number on duty in the CCC at one time peaked at 9,300 in August 1935.⁸³

Thousand of reserve officers were unemployed in the 1930s. Duty with the CCC helped their personal financial situations and at the same time provided them training in practical leadership and field experience.⁸⁴ After one of his inspection trips to the CCC camps in September, 1934, Colonel Major told the chief of staff that "next to service in war, there can be no training so beneficial to the reserve officers as service in the CCC."⁸⁵

Because the War Department regarded CCC duty as such a valuable training experience for reserve officers, it wanted to limit individual tours to 18 months so a maximum number of reserve officers could be rotated through. This became a political issue, as the reservists regarded their jobs as permanent, and they needed to keep them in the depression economy.

Corps area commanders determined the tour length of their reserve officers. Some called reservists up for six month tours; some "for the duration." Typically, reserve officers stayed on permanently but corps area commanders could relieve them for cause. The end result of the dispute over the permanency of jobs for the reserve officers was that the War Department yielded and at least 50 percent of the reservists stayed on for the duration.⁸⁶ However, in 1939, all reserves were taken out of uniform, but continued in their positions in a civilian status from then until the CCC was abolished in June, 1942.⁸⁷

CCC duty developed in the reserve officers executive ability, resourcefulness and initiative which was to stand them and the country in good stead in World War II.⁸⁸ It is probably true that for many of the reserve officers their decision to retain their reserve commissions and be available to serve in World War II was determined by their experience in the CCC.⁸⁹

Among the many benefits of using the reserve officers in the CCC, a very important one was that regular officers were released to their normal duties, or in the words of General MacArthur, "to activities that are vital to military effectiveness."⁹⁰

A more tangible benefit which the Army got from the CCC was conservation work on military installations. Appreciative of post improvements, Army officers fought to retain their CCC companies and to get new ones. The Army had as many as 60 CCC companies working on posts in 1936. At a low point in 1937, they had 46 companies.⁹¹

Examples of the kind of post conservation work was that done by Work Company No. 2731 which was organized at Fort Leavenworth and worked on the post from July 6, 1934, until November 2, 1935, when it was replaced by Work Company No. 4717. Those CCC companies worked on soil erosion, cut fire lanes and trails, pruned and protected trees and planted thousands of trees and shrubs.⁹² That was the

typical kind of work, but apparently at the Vancouver Barracks Post in Washington, the CCC men did carpentry work, improved married housing inside and out, and constructed athletic facilities.⁹³ In 1941, some enrollees worked in military hospitals. The Chief of Staff, General Marshall wrote to the national director, Mr. McEntee, to tell him he wanted more enrollees, as he viewed their "...splendid work... vitally necessary to the Army and has proved a valuable asset."⁹⁴

NET EFFECTS

The CCC made tangible and intangible contributions to the Army and to national defense. The Army's massive involvement with the CCC had some temporarily negative effects on the Army's readiness to carry out its primary mission, but the negative effects were short lived. Whatever the category of negative effect, i.e., training, morale, enlistments, each reflected on national defense. Similarly, positive effects, whatever the category, i.e., training, manpower, appropriations, post conservation, chaplaincy, reserves, public relations...all reflected back on national defense.

The evidence shows overwhelmingly that every negative effect was counteracted by one or more positive effects. For example, conventional military field training and professional military education were ceased temporarily

so the Army could carry out the CCC mobilization task. This cessation of training had the potential of causing the most serious consequences for Army readiness and national defense. But the preponderance of expert opinion says that the Army gained invaluable experience in practical leadership, administration and in the execution of the rapid mobilization plan. Such experience would not be considered by military leaders as better than Army field training and formal schooling. However, the practical training had its own value, and as some senior officers said, it was the best training the officers could have had short of war.

If the Army had not been involved in the CCC, certainly military appropriations would have been cut further by the Congress and officer strength would have been reduced by as many as 4,000. Such reductions would have had drastic negative impacts on military training. Readiness and defense capability would have suffered worse if the Army had not participated in the CCC project.

The CCC effect on Army morale and enlistments was relatively mild. In October-November, 1933, partly in response to complaints about Army enlisted men's pay, Colonel Duncan Major inspected the CCC camps. He found that the enlisted men were actually enjoying the novelty of the job and their relatively prestigious positions in the CCC camps. "Major concluded that the pay differential had no appreciable effect on morale."95

While negative effects were temporary and relatively mild, positive effects of the CCC on the Army and national defense were long lasting and significant. The most obvious example of an enduring and significant positive effect was the practical experience in leadership which as many as 30,000 reserve officers received. Equally as significant and long lasting, though not as obvious, were the public image benefits the Army gained. Also of incalculable value, and especially obvious in the early years of World War II, was the benefit to national defense capability of the skilled manpower pool which CCC training developed. Recognizing that benefit, the public, the President and the Congress, as the CCC program came to an end, favored a permanent "Conservation Corps" which could also serve as a basic training program for all youth.⁹⁶

Certainly, military men too thought the CCC had had a net positive effect on the Army. For Colonel Major proposed to support legislation to have a permanent CCC with military training required.⁹⁷

SUMMARY

The CCC had negative and positive effects on the Army and national defense. The Army's status and national defense capability when the Army became involved in the CCC in April, 1933, was at a low point. In some respects the

CCC, at least temporarily, hurt Army readiness and defense capability even worse--brought it below the "danger line," in 1933, according to General MacArthur.

The CCC had negative effects in terms of lower morale, fewer enlistments, and less training. Some senior officers concluded the net effect was diminished national defense capability.

The CCC had positive effects in terms of preventing Army budget cuts and manpower reductions, providing leadership opportunities, strengthening reserve officer experience, boosting the Chaplaincy Corps, advancing conservation work on posts, improving training grounds and facilities, in developing a civilian manpower pool with war production skills and skills of direct use in military service. Finally the Army's public image was improved. All these positive effects enhanced defense capability. The best evidence of the sum total of the positive effects is the fact that America was better prepared for World War II than it had been for any previous conflict.

The Army's defense capability in 1933 was nearly as bad as it could have been according to the Chief of Staff. After nearly a decade of involvement with the CCC, the Army's defense capability was significantly improved. The Army was in a far better condition to go to war than it had ever been before according to an assessment in The Department of the Army Manual.⁹⁸

All the Army's improvements during the period 1933-1942 were not due to its involvement in the CCC. However, the Army did realize direct and indirect benefits from its participation in the CCC which contributed to its improved condition.

The net effect of the CCC experience on the Army and national defense was positive.

CHAPTER 4 ENDNOTES

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- 4 T. Harry Williams, Americans at War, (1960): pp. 93-100.
- 5 Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army, (1967): p. 352.
- 6 Watson, p. 19; and The Statistical History of the United States (1976): pp. 1114 and 1141.
- 7 Killigrew, p. I-16.
- 8 Ibid., p. II-4.
- 9 Weigley, p. 402.
- 10 The Department of the Army Manual, (1982): pp. 5-16.
- 11 ARSW, 1933, p. 15.
- 12 Ibid., p. 49.
- 13 Manchester, p. 6.
- 14 Killigrew, p. X-10.
- 15 Ibid., p. vi.
- 16 Ibid., pp. X-11-23.
- 17 Ibid., pp. X-8-23.
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- 19 New York Times (June 18, 1933): pp. 1,8.

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- 21 Swing, p. 459.
- 22 Johnson Dissertation, p. 14.
- 23 New York Times (June 15, 1942): p. 21.
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- 25 Alexander Hamilton in Earle, p. 135.
- 26 ARSW, 1933, p. 8.
- 27 Waigley, p. 402.
- 28 ANJ (December 2, 1933): p. 261.
- 29 Crossland and Currie, p. 44.
- 30 Swing, pp. 459-60.
- 31 Killigrew, p. VI-16.
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- 40 Ibid., pp. 175-176.
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- 42 ARSW, 1933, p. 9.
- 43 Putnam, p. 54.

- 44 ARSW, 1937, p. 32.
- 45 ANJ (July 8, 1933): p. 893.
- 46 Killigrew, p. X111-24.
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- 53 Putnam, p. 54.
- 54 Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall
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- 55 Killigrew, p. V-29.
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- 57 Bland and Ritenour, p. 639.
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- 77 Gushwa, p. 58.
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- 82 Crossland and Currie, p. 45.
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CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

EVALUATION OF ARMY EFFECTS ON THE CCC AND THE ECONOMY

The Army made many significant contributions to the CCC. It was the adoptive parent of the CCC, taking it over after President Franklin D. Roosevelt had conceived the project, and caring for the CCC from its birth in 1933 until its demise in 1942. The Army mobilized, organized, fed, clothed, housed, transported, doctored, paid, disciplined, rewarded, trained, entertained and provided religious services for the CCC enrollees.

Army officers, mostly reserve officers after June, 1934, commanded the CCC camps. The quality of camp life was due to the initiative, leadership and managerial ability of the camp commanders. The camps had meager equipment and many cost less than \$20,000 a piece, which covered the company commander's home, infirmary, barracks, and mess hall. Each 200-man camp got four sets of horseshoes, two volleyball sets, four sets of boxing gloves and enough bats, balls and gloves for two baseball teams. Very few educational materials were provided: only two envelopes and six sheets of writing paper per man per week, along with a set of Army and Navy hymnals, a dictionary, and a few athletic handbooks. Enrollees also had the privilege of

sharing a traveling library. Company commanders, however, supplemented camp equipment by making friends with leading citizens in the nearby communities and begging books, musical instruments, tools, athletic equipment, furnishing of all kinds and even carpentry help and donations to build camp recreation halls.¹

In most camps the commanders and enrollees liked and trusted each other. Many camp commanders had enrollee self-government; some had enrollee councils and camp forums. Many had baseball teams, camp newspapers, acting companies, weekly movie nights, and dances every two weeks. Generally morale was high and camps functioned smoothly.²

Most of the camps generated their own electricity and provided their own water. Many raised vegetable gardens.³ The vigorous work the youths did in a healthful environment, coupled with nourishing food, resulted in improved physical and mental health. Some sources reported the CCC enrollees gained from seven to twelve pounds each. One writer said he personally saw improvements in malnourished youth in 1935. He observed that after only a few days in camp young men gained five pounds.⁴

The military doctors helped to ensure the enrollees left the CCC healthier than when they came. Good health care reduced the death rate of CCC enrollees to one-third the rate for the nation's corresponding age group.⁵

The Army did inflict some militarism on the enrollees, as some Americans had feared. However, the consensus about that effect from the opinions of the enrollees themselves, parents, and politicians, was positive. The net result of the militarism was that the young men learned personal discipline and group discipline. They learned to get along together, tolerate differences in each other and work as a team.

The Army had used care to avoid militarizing the enrollees. However, the routine of Army life made the appearance of "Army" in the camps inevitable. As reported in one magazine: "A bugle call wakes them at 6:15 in the morning and sounds taps at 10:45 at night. They wear khaki, and their elected leaders...have red chevrons on their sleeves."⁶ The camps were laid out like Army posts. Tents were lined up in company streets. The young men were assembled in military-like formations for roll calls and they marched from place to place. Appearances would have indicated that the enrollees were indeed being militarized. But the reality was that the Army had no actual military authority over enrollees, and the enrollees knew that. They were free to walk away anytime.

Army management of camp life was an overall good experience for CCC enrollees. For the most part camp esprit and morale were high. Even those young men who

walked away, and absented themselves without leave (AWOL), often wrote back to camp commanders expressing their regrets for leaving and asking to be allowed to return, vowing that the CCC was the best thing in their lives.⁷

Military leaders also thought that CCC life was a good experience for the enrollees and that it would have long term good benefits for the nation. Corps commanders intended to fashion life in the CCC camps so the young men would return to their communities with higher ideals and values and skills which would enable them to contribute useful service. As an example, Major General Frank Parker, Commander of the Sixth Corps Area, told his CCC camp commanders to teach the young men respect for authority, to train them to have a cooperative spirit, to ensure they internalized the lesson that man's highest usefulness is to serve "the interests of his unit, whether that unit be a squad, family or community."⁸ Parker wanted the young men impressed with the value of good manners and appearance, a properly modulated voice, the imperative to avoid obscenity and profanity and to appreciate the value of a general quietness of behavior. Such characteristics inculcated, Parker and others believed, would be as useful to the civilian community as they had proven to be to the military.⁹ Evidently, the young men themselves, in retrospect, felt that way also, for their letters collected

in several books frequently mentioned the character building value of CCC camp life.¹⁰ Reports in The New York Times, Nation magazine and other periodicals of that era attest to the good social results.

The Army's influence on the CCC organization and on the individual enrollees was direct and apparent and overall indisputably positive. However, the Army's influence on the general welfare of the nation, i.e., the economy, via its participation in the CCC, was indirect and evidenced only by extrapolation.

President Roosevelt had predicted that CCC work would be "a means of creating future national wealth."¹¹ It would indeed create an incalculably great future wealth, but most importantly at that time, it created immediate economic benefits for the nation. The Army contributed by its efficient management of procurement and fiscal matters for the CCC.

The military has been used on various occasions as a pump primer for the economy. In the case of the CCC, however, the military managed a civilian program which was created at least in part as a pump primer. The Army's decentralized procurement policy for CCC camps created economic activity all over the country.

Subsistence items like coal, gasoline, oil, meat, and food products of all kinds were purchased in the communities nearest the camps. Camp commanders often bought

directly from local farmers. Nearly anyone with merchandise to sell was able to do business with the CCC camps.¹²

The Army's allotment system which sent monthly contributions to families was a rapid method of channeling money into circulation. CCC salaries helped create jobs for factory workers and trainmen.¹³ A camp of 200 men spent about \$15,000 per month, one-third of it locally, one-third nationally and one-third back home.¹⁴ Hundreds of communities discovered that the CCC camp was the "bright spot on their business map."¹⁵

The Army and Navy Journal reported on July 8, 1933, that the quartermaster had let CCC contracts for:

2,500,000 yards of denim	500,000 pairs of shoes
785,000 summer drawers	250,000 canvas coats
185,000 denim hats	475,000 bath towels
1,000,000 jumpers	685,000 face towels
28,000 coveralls	300 motor ambulances
700,000 denim trousers	300 passenger cars
525,000 wool trousers	3,000 motor trucks
1,150,000 summer undershirts	

The article reported also that \$85,000 per day was being spent to feed enrollees.¹⁶

Other contracts were soon let for new winter clothing and equipment for the CCC men. Millions of dollars were spent for lumber, stoves and other equipment and

supplies to make the cold weather camps habitable during the winter months.¹⁷

Such contracts were let throughout the life of the CCC, and the cash expenditures of enrollees and their families continued apace. By the end of calendar year 1934, \$164,000,000 a month was going out to CCC families in allotment checks.¹⁸ The Army and Navy Journal reported in its 75th Anniversary edition in 1937 that as of that date approximately \$2,000,000,000 had been expended on the CCC program. More than half of that amount was for foodstuffs, clothing, supplies and equipment. More than half a billion dollars was paid in cash allowances to enrollees and sent to needy dependents at home. Virtually every industry in America benefited directly or indirectly from the huge contracts and cash spending of the CCC.¹⁹ The Army did not directly make this economic contribution, but, via the CCC, the Army certainly played a large role in stimulating America's business community during the depression years.

Nor did the Army have a direct role in the CCC's conservation work. However, by conditioning the men for work in the fields, training them to work safely and as a team, the Army indirectly contributed to the conservation work of the CCC, which had long lasting value to the nation.

In 1935 experts had already calculated that the CCC had advanced conservation work in America by 20 years. The

replacement value of projects completed at that early time was \$335,000,000.²⁰ And significantly, but of incalculable value, the CCC boys had cut the nation's forest fire loss by 83 percent.²¹

The annual cost to the nation for each CCC enrollee was put at \$1,004, which was more than the cost for each participant in other relief programs such as the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration. The physical value per CCC enrollee in 1941 was estimated at \$664. However, all the achievements in conservation and the health and pride of the CCC youth could not be measured in economic terms. There was no way to measure the many intangible benefits.²² For value received over the long run compared to the amount invested in the CCC youth, the program showed an astonishing profit.²³

The Army certainly had helped to make the CCC a good deal for America's economy. The consensus to that effect was overwhelming as reflected in articles in the New York Times, Nation, Business Week and by comment from government officials, to include the President and the Congress. In looking back 30 years, Senator Henry Jackson assessed the CCC effect on the economy as phenomenal. In 1971, he proposed that a modern day program based on the tried and proven concepts of the 1930s CCC be

established to address the ills of unemployment and the squandering of scarce natural resources -- problems still extant.²⁴

No historian has contended that the CCC or all of the New Deal programs together brought the nation out of the depression of the 1930s. It was, rather, World War II which finally spurred the economy to full recovery. Still, New Deal programs, and especially the Army-managed CCC, helped significantly.

EVALUATION OF CCC EFFECTS ON THE ARMY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

In 1933, when the Army became involved in the CCC, Army strength and national defense capability were at a low point. The Chief of Staff had labeled readiness as "below the danger line." Then in 1941, near the end of Army involvement in the CCC, the Army's strength and national defense capability as measured by Army peacetime strength, then at 1,462,315, was at an all time high. Consequently, the Army entered World War II better prepared than it had ever been for any previous conflict. This is not to say that Army strength and national defense capability had improved only because of the Army's participation in the CCC. However, the evidence indicates and the preponderance of informed opinion agrees that there was a positive relationship.

There are many factors that determine an Army's strength. An adequate budget is the first requirement. The size of the standing Army and the amount and quality of weapon systems it has are dependent on the amount of money appropriated for military activities. Classroom and field training in the art of war are factors. The size and level of experience of reserve forces are important considerations. A civilian production base which can provide the weapons and equipment and supplies of war is critical. A large civilian manpower pool with war production and/or military skills which can be quickly mobilized in times of crises is indispensable. Regarding every one of these factors, the CCC program had a positive effect in the short run and/or in the long run.

It was noted that the Army was taken away from its primary duty for several months while it mobilized and organized the CCC. Until the reserves were called up in large numbers in June, 1934, the majority of active duty Army officers were on duty in the CCC camps. A crisis during that period would have found the U.S. Army unprepared because of its involvement in the CCC. However, in 1929, the General Staff had said the world situation was quiescent and would remain so for the foreseeable future.²⁵ There was virtually no chance of a situation that would require a military response. Furthermore, if the General Staff had

thought otherwise, it is likely that evidence could have been presented to the President which would have resulted in his decision not to use the Army in the CCC. However, there was little likelihood that such evidence could have been contrived credibly in view of the Army's interesting priority of officer replacement in the CCC camps. It is noteworthy that throughout the depression era, the Army used reserve officers to replace regular officers in the CCC camps who were slated to go to the Army school system or to civilian component duty or Reserve Officer Training Corps duty in the nation's colleges and universities.²⁶ As important as the military school system might be, it is unlikely that manning the system is a first priority of defense. Thus, since regular officers, upon being replaced by reserves, went first to school assignments, it seems reasonable to conclude that no important defense areas were neglected.

Since there was no urgent requirement for national defense preparations, the Army's temporary involvement in the CCC had no meaningful negative consequences for preparedness. On the other hand, the Army's involvement in the CCC did have immediate and unexpected positive consequences for preparedness. Namely, the CCC required keeping all regular officers on duty, plus the call up of many reserves. According to General George C. Marshall, the CCC project prevented Congress from cutting the military

appropriation and reducing the officer force by four thousand.²⁷

The Army benefited and so did national defense in numerous ways as a result of the CCC experience. The Army had a chance via the CCC to do in peacetime many of the things it trained to do in war. The mobilization of the CCC was a perfect rehearsal for World War II. Young officers got valuable experience in command and leadership techniques, and learned some of the difficult lessons of administration and logistics. Because of the special leadership experiences the officers gained, Secretary of War George Dern said the CCC was the most valuable experience the Army ever had.²⁸

It seems obvious that the Army got better treatment from Congress as a result of the favorable public image the Army earned by its management of the CCC. The improved public image also resulted in more enlistments for the Army in the 1930s. Some young men in the CCC camps were impressed by the soldiers who ran their camps and they wanted to be soldiers, too. Some requested military training in the camps, which had to be denied because the CCC charter forbade it. But some of the enrollees conducted military drills on their own and saluted the Army officers in their camps.²⁹ Congress made it possible later for the Army to enlist these eager young men when it provided larger appropriations and authorized strength increases each year

after fiscal year 1934. By June 30, 1938, Army strength had risen to 173,455 after a low point in 1933 of 135,015.³⁰ Strength figures and appropriations would continue to rise after 1938, but the later increases were probably due to the increasingly tense situation in Europe more than to anything else.

Military leaders of the 1930s are noted the various benefits that accrued to the Army and national defense as a result of the Army's CCC experience. Marshall, Arnold, MacArthur and others mentioned frequently that the experience that the reserve officers gained was most valuable. The second benefit most frequently mentioned by military leaders, the secretary of war, historians and media reporters of that era was the skilled manpower pool that CCC training developed. James J. McEntee, Director of the CCC from 1939-1942, said the CCC's greatest usefulness was "as a training and national preparedness agency."³¹ More recently, in summarizing the Army's CCC experience, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Putnam said the military training in the last year-and-a-half of the CCC in noncombative skills -- cooking, demolition, road and bridge construction, radio operation and signal communication -- was the way that the CCC made its most significant contribution to national defense.³²

It is certainly true also that a productive economy is vital to a strong national defense. And the CCC helped generate economic activity which revitalized America's production base. CCC-trained men, some three million of them, had skilled jobs in industry at the beginning of World War II which helped the nation to produce the tools of war. The value of a skilled populace was attested to just recently in a booklet published by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Military Posture, FY1946. It said, "The military potential of nations can be measured, in part, by peacetime production bases..."³³

The Army's CCC experience, of course, had little to do with how to fight a war in terms of combat arms training, but it had a great deal to do with the logistics of war, i.e., how to supply and administer the needs of men and equipment in the field. The CCC was an excellent logistics training ground. And the importance of logistics expertise is underscored by Martin Van Creveld in his book, Supplying War. He studied Napoleon and other great generals' methods of supplying war and concluded that logistics is nine-tenths of the business of war.³⁴ Certainly the lessons the Army learned in the CCC helped the Army with the logistics business of war in World War II.

Such an experience was a greater advantage than the temporary halt of combat arms training was a disadvantage.

The net result of the Army's experience in the CCC then was an improvement in readiness and national defense posture. No historian would argue that the CCC experience alone produced an Army that was ready for World War II. In fact, major military build-ups did not occur until 1941, the year that America entered the war. Still, the Army's involvement in the CCC clearly helped it to prepare for World War II in various ways. At least it would seem that without the CCC experience the Army would have been less ready for war.

INTERACTIVE EFFECTS OF THE CIVIL-MILITARY ACTIVITIES

Historical evidence shows that military participation in civilian pursuits has invariably had effects on the common defense, the general welfare and national power as a whole, and those effects have been predominantly positive.

The very act which established the Department of War in 1789 gave the military responsibility for the improvement of navigable waters and the construction of highways. Later the Army was given weather reporting duties and civil engineering responsibilities such as surveying, exploring and mapping unknown territories. By the late nineteenth century the Army was involved in the construction of public buildings. Military men erected the north and south wings of the Capitol building and began building the aqueduct in Washington, D.C. 35 As the nation made the transition

into the twentieth century, the Army continued to open frontiers and undertook "construction programs which assisted the expansion of commerce and industry."³⁶

As the Army's Corps of Engineers participated in various civil works programs around the country, the Corps developed relationships with civilian construction industry and the engineering profession which resulted in improvements to military engineering capabilities.³⁷

The Army engineers led the construction of the Panama Canal, 1903-1914. The completion of that project saved the nation the expense of maintaining large fleets in two oceans and made it easier for a smaller navy to be responsive to a threat from any direction.³⁸ A side benefit to the nation and to national defense during the construction of the Panama Canal was the Army medical department's inroads against malaria and yellow fever. Controlling those debilitating diseases had a positive impact on soldier readiness. For, historically, more soldiers have been lost as a result of sickness and disease in war than to wounds.

The Corps of Engineers continued its civil works program through the depression era, working with the CCC in various construction and flood control projects. Such activities helped the engineers sharpen war skills. The Army Almanac said, "The ability of the Corps of Engineers to handle its military tasks...is derived largely from its

civil works program..."³⁹ The CCC was the Corps of Engineer's last best opportunity to exercise in peacetime the skills it would need for its vital role in World War II.

The Army Air Corps would have been on a much poorer footing at the beginning of World War II had it not been involved in civilian flying activities. The first arial mail service was founded and organized by Army Captain Benjamin B. Lipaner. He and six other Army aviators flew the mail from May to August, 1918. The service satisfied both America's need for air mail delivery and the Army's need for experienced pilots. The Army was out of the air mail service only a few months after getting it started.⁴ The Army again took it over on February 19, 1934, and operated it till June 1, 1934, as an economy measure during the New Deal. It was a disastrous experience for the Army Air Corps. There were numerous accidents and several aviators were killed as the Army tried to keep mail schedules under all conditions, in bad weather, night and day, flying decrepit, ragged airplanes. But the aviators learned valuable lessons in navigation, instrumentation and all-weather flying. Finally, the publicity the Air Corps received opened the way to new appropriations vital to the development of the Air Corps.⁴¹ The commander of the Air Corps, Major General Benjamin B. Foulois said, "The flying of the mail was a godsend to the Army Air Corps and to America. Without the [experience, the

Army Air Corps would not have been]...prepared for an answer to Pearl Harbor."42

A perusal of military history has failed to find any example of military involvement in civilian pursuits which has not apparently had benefits for both the common defense and the general welfare of the nation. The CCC, the biggest civilian project and of the longest duration of any that the peacetime military has been involved with, appeared to have had the most profound positive effects on national power, which in this thesis was defined primarily as the combination of military strength and economic strength.

CONCLUSIONS

It was an assumption of this thesis that military strength is increased by larger budgets, larger manpower authorizations, larger, well trained reserves, a more skilled population base (one with a great diversity of skills, including basic military skills), greater productive capacity, greater readiness and ability to mobilize, a more favorable image for the professional military and greater public support. A second assumption was that economic strength is enhanced by higher levels of business activity and public consumption of goods and services, higher levels of employment, more efficient use of and more effective conservation of natural resources, higher hope, morale and a sense of well being among the populace. Finally, it was

assumed that of the several elements of national power, military strength and economic strength were most important, and that the greater they are the greater is national power. These assumptions are not controversial. They have general acceptance among scholars, government officials and military leaders who analyze national power.

This study examined the military's involvement in the CCC with the above group of assumptions as a point of departure and came to the following conclusions:

(1) The military and national defense benefited from the CCC experience.

(2) The economy benefited from the military's involvement with the CCC.

(3) The interactive effect of the military impact on the CCC and of the CCC impact on the military was positive. That is to say, as the CCC and the Army contributed to each other, economic and military strength were increased, resulting in enhanced national power. As a consequence, America was more prepared for World War II than it would have been without the CCC experience.

(4) The CCC experience reinforced the assumption held from the earliest days of the Republic to today that military strength and economic strength are interrelated.

(5) It would not be in the best interests of national power to use the peacetime military exclusively as a defense force.

To determine whether the benefits realized from the CCC experience were unique, this study also looked briefly at other domestic service and nation building ventures in which the peacetime military has been involved, e.g., explorations, construction, air mail service, etc. It was found in each case, as with the CCC, that apparently the common defense and the general welfare benefited. Therefore, it would seem prudent to continue to employ the peacetime military in appropriate projects today which might enhance both economic and military strength.

However, it is suggested that such projects be carefully selected, that results be planned and that cause and effect relationships be programmed so that maximum benefits to the economy and to the military might result.

It was noted in this study that the benefits which accrued to the economy and to national defense as a result of the CCC experience were often coincidental. Positive effects may have been more significant if they had been planned and if activities had been manipulated to achieve them.

A PEACETIME ROLE FOR THE MILITARY TODAY

The lessons of history show that both the economy and national defense benefit when the peacetime military is involved in domestic service or nation building roles. Accordingly, it should be prudent today to employ the

military in dual roles. The armed forces should have an enunciated dual purpose: to provide for the common defense and to promote the general welfare.

To determine how to use the peacetime military most effectively, a "national power enhancement commission" should be established at the Cabinet level. That planning body's method of operation should be based on the following assumptions: (1) that economic strength and military strength are interrelated; (2) that if the economy and the military are effectively played together to complement each other both will increase in strength; (3) that as both increase in strength national power will be enhanced.

The commission should have a charter not only to select appropriate domestic service programs in which to involve the military but also to plan activities and to program cause and effect relationships to ensure that maximum benefits accrue to both the economy and national defense. That is to say, the commission must have management authority to effect desired results, because the nation should not have to depend on the vagaries of luck and coincidental good effects, as was the case in the CCC program and in other ventures.

The commission might be comprised of representatives from industry and from the Departments of Commerce; Labor; Interior; Agriculture; Health, Education and Welfare, and Defense. The commission should adopt the tried and proven

concepts of the CCC of the 1930s, and it should adapt the CCC's goals to fit modern day requirements. The goals of unemployment relief for disadvantaged youth and of improving the nation's natural resources might be the same today. Other fortuitous results from the old CCC experience should become enunciated goals in a modern CCC. For example, technical training and education should become primary goals; improving the military's image and increasing public support should become primary goals; developing a population base with para-military skills should become a specific goal. To specify all objectives might result in management actions to achieve them and to maximize benefits from them for both the economy and the military and, ultimately, for national power.

There are two projects which the military, under the direction of the commission, might manage and administer similarly to the CCC of the 1930s: (1) homes for the homeless; (2) technical education for the youth of families below the poverty line. Other agencies represented in the commission should have various responsibilities in these projects as they did in the CCC.

The homes-for-the-homeless project should enroll thousands and provide enrollees, via public works, the opportunity to learn marketable skills. The largest portion of their minimum wage salary might be held for them until

their one-year enrollments were finished. At that time, with a savings account to sustain them and with new, important skills, most should be able to make a transition into the labor market and become self sufficient.

The youth-technical-education program should enroll hundreds of thousands of young men and women from the millions of families below the official poverty line in America. It is recommended that free, one-year technical education courses be taught. Classroom work and practical application training could make the youth a highly skilled group, invaluable to the production base of this technical society.

The infrastructure already exists in the uniformed services of the United States to conduct such an education program. Large and sophisticated technical training centers are in operation all over the country. Everything from basic carpentry to advanced electronics is taught. The training centers could be expanded. Branches could be established. No expense need be spared, for the ultimate payback would compensate the nation many fold.

During the course of their one-year enrollment in the program the young men and women should receive some para-military instruction, as the CCC youth did. At the end of their enrollment, they should be obligated to serve four years of reserve military duty. However, they would

constitute a special category civilian reserve, subject to a call to national service only in the event of full mobilization. Even then, these "civilian reserves" should have options to perform their national service in various capacities. The important thing is that these modern civilian reserves, like the CCC veterans, would be at least "85 percent ready" to support the country's effort in a national emergency. Many could enter the armed forces and quickly become effective soldiers. Many could work in defense related industries.

In any case, like the 1930s CCC, the modern CCC programs could provide a skilled manpower pool -- men and women with technical skills and basic military skills -- which would ensure a viable, in-depth defense base in America.

The purpose here is not to conceive and delineate the details of these proposed projects. Rather, it is to suggest that these are the kinds of projects which the peacetime military could be involved with and which could be managed and administered after the fashion of the CCC and which could have positive effects on national power as the CCC did.

The impacts on the economy, on the long term wealth of the nation, on the military and on national defense capability of such projects could be more significant now and in the future than the CCC was in the 1930s. For it is

widely recognized that there is an urgent need in both the civilian and military community of technically skilled people. There is a need for more people who can operate and fix the sophisticated systems of this technological age.

Americans have generally favored subsidies to education, recognizing the many benefits which accrue to the nation. Using the established military technical training system as a base for an expanded national technical education program should be an economical way to produce the technicians needed by complex military and industrial systems today. Economic strength should increase. National defense capability should increase. The net effect should be increased national power.

The military's involvement in a national youth technical education program might result in a kind of universal military training program in America, which has been favored by political and military leaders since George Washington. Renowned statesmen have embraced universal military training for the general welfare of the nation, not merely for military reasons. Leaders have felt universal military training would be a means of disciplining the young, improving their physiques, teaching them patriotism, cooperation, team spirit and to be effective contributors to the economy.⁴³

The military's management of a youth technical education program might again win the military extraordinary public favor. The result might be that the majority of the population would favor today, as it did by the end of the CCC program, universal military training. And with the military rendering a service of visible benefit to the general welfare of the nation, the citizenry would likely regard its peacetime military as more than a "necessary evil." And the professional soldier would likely feel better about being in uniform in peacetime.

The peacetime military's involvement in domestic service and nation building roles has historically resulted in benefits to both the economic strength and the military strength of the nation. Involvement today in appropriate activities such as youth technical education and CCC-like public works programs should serve the best interests of the nation. Such employment of the peacetime military might be just as the framers of the Constitution envisioned when they enunciated that among the several reasons for establishing the Constitution was "to...provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare...."

CHAPTER 3 ENDNOTES

- 1 Mitchell, p. 65.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 ANJ (Sept. 2, 1933): pp. 12-13.
- 4 Mitchell, p. 65.
- 5 "Work Relief," The News-Week at Home (April 20, 1935): pp. 7-8.
- 6 "Conservation Corps: Army Starts Its Second Half Year," The News-Week at Home (Oct. 7, 1933): p. 10.
- 7 ANJ (Sept. 2, 1933): p. 13.
- 8 Ibid., p. 12.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 See, for example, letters in Oliver and Dudley, pp. 65-110.
- 11 President Roosevelt in Rosenman, Vol 2, pp. 80-81.
- 12 ARSW, 1934, p. 29.
- 13 "Work Relief," p. 7.
- 14 "CCC Also Spends," p. 12.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 ANJ (July 8, 1933): p. 895.
- 17 ANJ (Sept. 2, 1933): p. 11.
- 18 New York Times (Jan. 1, 1935):p. 29.
(This figure is as quoted by Secretary of War George Dern,
but I believe he meant \$164 million up to that point.)

45. 19 ANJ, 75th Anniversary Edition, 1937, p.
- 20 Mitchell, p. 64.
- 21 "Conservation Corps" in Newsweek at Home, p. 7.
- 22 Putnam, p. 45.
- 23 Salmond, p. 129.
- 24 U.S. Congressional Record, Senate, 1st Session, April 20, 1971, p. 10911.
- 25 Killigrew, p. I-16.
- 26 Ibid., p. XI11-3.
- 27 Pogue, p. 276.
- 28 Putnam, p. 58.
- 29 Julien B. Lindsey, "The Largest CCC Camp in the Country," Infantry Journal (July-August, 1933): pp. 267-270.
- 30 ARSW, 1933, p. 146 and ARSW, 1938, p. 52.
- 31 Merrill, p. 196.
- 32 Putnam, p. 58.
- 33 United States Military Posture FY 1986, p. 14.
- 34 Martin Van Creveld, Supplying War (1977): p. 231.
- 35 The Department of the Army Manual p. 5-3 through 5-6.
- 36 Ibid., p. 5-8.
- 37 Ibid., p. 4-8.

- 38 Ibid., p. 5-12.
- 39 Young, p. 235.
- 40 Page Shamburger, Tracks Across the Sky
(1964): pp. 11-26.
- 41 Ibid., pp. 152-164.
- 42 Ibid., p. 165.
- 43 Walter Millie, Arms and Men (1956): p.
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